



# In Danger and Out of It.

BY THE  
REV. T. J. MACMURRAY.

FIRST SERIES.



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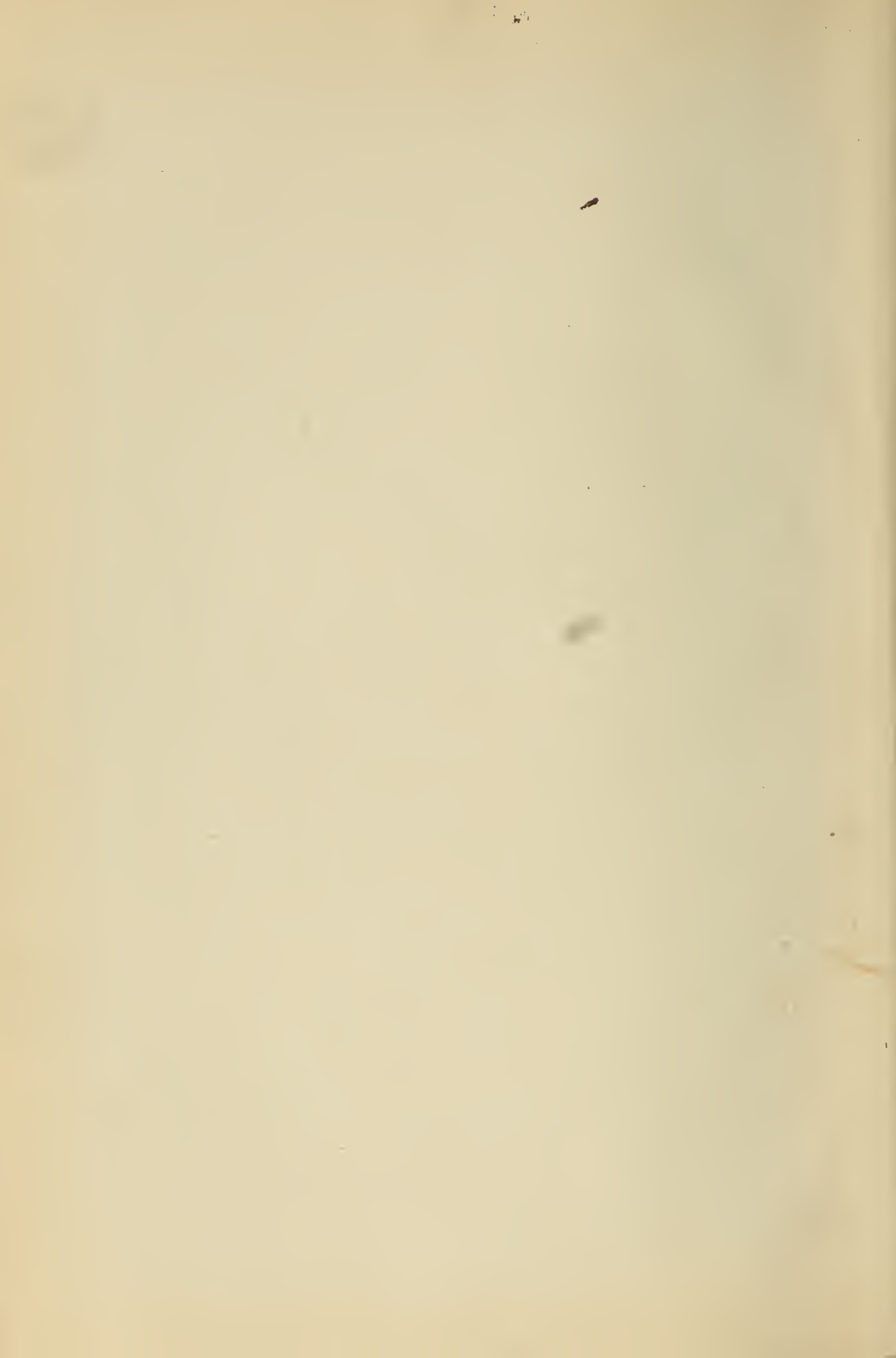
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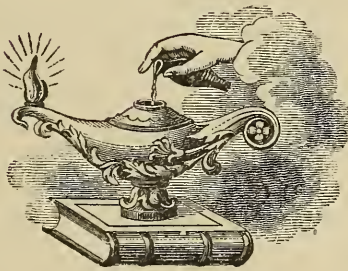
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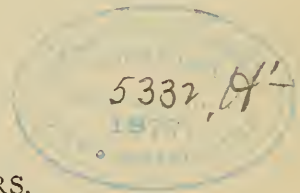
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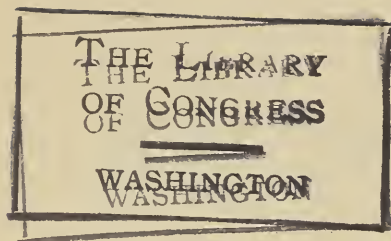
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REV. T. J. MACMURRAY.



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TO  
MY BELOVED, CHRISTIAN MOTHER,  
THIS  
VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY  
INSCRIBED.

## PREFACE.

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**B**EING convinced of the rampancy of evil, and believing the pure Press to be a most potent means for the suppression of it, and for the ennoblement of humanity, I offer to the public this volume of sermonic literature, which attempts to unmask error, to rescue the careless from the vortex of unsanctified usages, and to point out the grand source of safety and real enjoyment. Regardless of consequences, and in the face of threats, I have spoken undauntedly in exposing evil and warning those in danger. The delivery of these discourses has, under God's blessing, produced good results; and should their circulation among the masses bring a repentant tear, or gladden some tremulous heart, or stimulate the christian worker to greater activity, I shall be highly gratified.

God grant that all the readers of this book may be eternally benefited by the perusal of it.

*E. J. Macnamay.*



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# IN DANGER AND OUT OF IT.

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## DAVID IN IMMINENT PERIL.

“If thou save not thy life to-night, to-morrow thou shalt be slain.”—1 *Sam.*, XIX., 11.

THE body-guard of king Saul are in a state of uneasiness. They are anxious to know where to find the best musician for the king. One in the guard suggests a young man named David, as minstrel. Saul instantly sends for him. David now leaves the field, where he has been watching the sheep, and is brought before the king. The appearance of the youth is prepossessing. He is of short stature, with auburn hair, and eyes beautifully bright. His countenance is handsome, his figure is graceful, and he is distinguished for his strength, swiftness and activity. The harp

is his favorite instrument, and he now plays before Saul, who is delighted with the sweet strains that playfully flit throughout his dazzling court; and he loves David and makes him his armor-bearer.

Shortly after this incident, David leaves Saul's court, and returns to Beth-lehem, to feed his father's sheep. At this time there is great excitement throughout the country. The armies of the Israelites and Philistines are in battle array. The Israelites are drawn up on one side of the valley of Elah, and the Philistines drawn up on the other side. A champion and giant named Goliath steps proudly forward from the ranks of the Philistines, and insults the armies of Israel, which are stationed on the opposite mountain. This giant says: "I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man that we may fight together!" These words fill Saul and his men with dismay. David, the king's musician, happened to be among the armies of Israel, when the giant spoke, for his father had sent him there with provisions for Saul's armies; and, upon hearing the war-cry, David's martial spirit is

aroused. He leaves the provisions in care of the baggage-master, rushes into the midst of the lines, to join his brothers, and shows a willingness to dash upon the insulting foe. His brothers rebuke him because of his actions, but he heeds them not. Then he hears the challenge, now made for the fortieth time; he sees the dismay of his countrymen, and he goes to Saul, and says unto him:—"Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine." David goes forward to meet the giant. He has a shepherd's sling in his hand, and when he reaches the stream, running between the hills, he picks up five smooth stones out of the brook, and places them in his wallet. He advances boldly towards his enemy, and the Philistine curses him. Then David takes a stone out of his wallet, puts it in the sling, and, in the name of the Lord, he raises his arm, strikes the Philistine in the forehead with the stone, effecting a mortal wound, and bringing the giant to the ground with violence. He now beheads the fallen champion, and the Philistines hastily retreat, and are chased and

defeated by the Israelites. A glorious victory has been won, and the triumphant songs of the Israelitish women echo through the land, for, in the person of David, they have found a deliverer mightier than Saul.

After this celebrated combat, Saul received David into his court, and appointed him captain of the body-guard—a position of high honor and great distinction. But the king becomes jealous of David, and is forming plans in order to murder him. The murderous design of Saul, however, is divulged to David by Jonathan, the king's son; and Michal, the king's daughter, who is the beloved wife of David, assists him to escape at night from the royal residence. She too has heard of her father's wicked intention, and it has made her frantic. Saul has sent out spies to watch for David, and slay him in the morning; and Michal hurries to her husband's room, opens the door, and while tears trickle down her cheeks, she exclaims, with a tremulous voice,—“If thou save not thy life to-night, to-morrow thou shalt be slain!”



I remark, first, that *the unconverted person is in imminent danger*. If he is not in danger, for what purpose, then, was the christian ministry instituted? If he is not exposed to eternal death, why does God say to the ungodly,—“Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish”? Man, in his natural state, is at variance with his maker. He refuses to love and obey God, and is, consequently, deserving of instant death. The Spirit strives with him, but he will not yield, and thus he hardens his heart against religious impressions. He chooses the way which leads to eternal destruction; he enrolls his signature in Satan’s register, and becomes an enemy to the King of kings—an offender of him who hung on Mount Calvary, and permitted his body to be lacerated, that sinners might escape everlasting punishment. O, unregenerate one, God is merciful and long-suffering, yet he is not to be trifled with. “My Spirit,” says he, “shall not always strive with man.” The sinner, then, is in impending peril. The displeasure of Jehovah hangs, like an angry cloud, above him, and the foamy torrent of

death thunders below him, and if he fall, there will be revealed to him the stern realities of another world!

“How shocking must thy summons be, O death,  
To him that is at ease in his possessions!  
Who, counting on long years of pleasure here,  
Is quite unfurnished for the world to come.”

David was exposed only to bodily death; but the ungodly are exposed to death, physical and eternal. They are in danger of losing, forever, their chances of gaining heaven—in danger of being too late to obtain an entrance into the saints' grand banqueting-hall—in danger of hearing the sentence “Depart!” instead of the acclamation “Well done!”—in danger of becoming victims of endless torment! And notwithstanding all, they show no anxiety to escape. They are in pursuit of only the pleasures of this life. They laugh wildly as they go whirling in the mazy dance, or while they raise the wine-chalice to their lips; but the Almighty will burst in upon them with vengeance, and break up their sports, as the Medes and Persians suddenly entered Belshazzar's palace, at the time when the king,

surrounded by his lords, his wives and his concubines, was feasting in the gorgeous banquet-room. Ah! yes, the sound of music and song will yet die away, the gay and dazzling circle will be smitten as with a paralytic stroke, the decanters will be dashed in pieces, flashing lights will go out, and God will declare his justice and authority. If, then, we are not children of God, we are in imminent peril. At any moment we are liable to be slain by the hand of our Creator, and left without the faintest hope of securing salvation or heaven. We live, not by any effort on our part, but at the pleasure of the Most High. Hence we know not when our probationary course here will terminate. But sooner or later we shall be called to pass through death's formidable vale; and, before the summons reaches us, how important it is that we be reconciled to God, and qualified for a position among the angels in heaven!

I remark, further, that *the unconverted person receives warnings to escape*. Michal warned her husband, when she said to him,—  
“If thou save not thy life to-night, to-morrow

thou shalt be slain." And numerous are the ways in which God warns the worldly-minded: he warns by operating upon their consciences, warns them by the Holy Scriptures, by pulpit ministrations, by frequent accidents and deaths, by hair-breadth escapes, and in many other ways.

A traveller who was journeying along the coast of Scotland, was thoughtlessly induced to take the road by the sands. This road is safe only at low tides, for on one side of it lies the deep sea, and on the other side rise lofty and unscalable cliffs. The traveller, charmed with the view of the rolling waves on the one hand, and the bold, towering rocks on the other, paid no attention to the rising waters that were fast nearing the natural wall along the beach. A man on the cliffs discerned him, saw his perilous situation, and warned him not to proceed, saying: "If you pass this spot, you lose your last chance of escape. The tides are rising. They have already covered the road you have passed, and they are near the foot of the cliffs before you; and by this ascent alone you can escape." The trav-

eller would not take the warning so kindly and earnestly given, but walked on. Soon he saw the danger of his situation. The sea, having reached the cliffs, forced him to stop; but, upon turning round, he found that to go back was impossible. He looked up despairingly to the cliffs, but they could not be ascended. At this time the waves had rolled to his feet. He sought higher ground, but was shortly compelled to move. Seeing a small rock near by him, he fled to it as a last resort, but the cruel waters rose and covered that rock; they rose still higher, and reached his neck. He cried for help, but no assistance could be rendered him, for he refused to make use of the last opportunity to escape. He heeded not the warning voice of the man on the cliffs, and now the sea rolls over his head, and he passes into eternity!

The sinner travels on a dangerous road, his opportunities to escape are becoming fewer and fewer, and he hears the warning voice above him. It is the voice of God who says to the wicked, "Turn ye, turn ye! for why will ye die?" But, alas! how many rush on-



ward to ruin, unmindful of the voice of caution! They watch the dark funeral procession following the cold remains of some loved one to the tomb; they hear the solemn, martial tread, and the plaintive notes of the cornet, and the muffled sound of drum in the "Dead March!" They see the tears of mourning friends, hear their bitter sobbings, and sorrowful utterances,—all these are warnings to escape eternal death. They hear the earnest appeals of Christ's ministers, feel the Holy Spirit striving with them, and behold sinners fleeing "from the wrath to come,"—these are warnings to escape eternal death. They see, in nature, the leaves casting aside their beauty, and the odorous flowers disrobed of their shining apparel, to wither and die, and the grass deprived of its verdancy,—these are warnings to escape eternal death. The ungodly have no excuse. Everywhere there are warnings. "How, then, shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

Lastly, I remark, that *immediate effort to escape is necessary on the part of the unconverted*. Had David refused to act, immedi-



ately after being warned to make his escape from Saul, doubtless he would have been murdered either by the King himself or his emissaries. "If thou save not thy life to-night, to-morrow thou shalt be slain." His wife helped him to escape. She opened the window for him, and he got out by that way, and went to Naioth and lived with Samuel. He had to leave the court that night in order to save his life. With him, it was either to remain there and die, or leave and avoid death. Promptness and activity were required of him, just what are required of the unconverted. No time for delay. "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation."

"While God invites, how blest the day!  
How sweet the gospel's charming sound!  
Come, sinners, haste, O haste away,  
While yet a pard'ning God is found."

A moment's delay may cause an eternity of misery. Salvation and heaven are attainable by you now; but how long they will be attainable by you, we are unable to determine. Then why allow your present chances to slip? You are foolishly standing upon the rapidly

sinking wreck—*procrastination*, while plank after plank is drifting out of your reach, and soon the last plank will leave you. Oh! this moment leap from the shattered hulk, and lay hold of the plank of eternal deliverance. A ship, far out on the ocean, is disabled by a storm. She's filling, and passengers and crew must leave her instantly; but there is one on board who remains, after all the others have abandoned her. That one person thinks it unnecessary to hurry, and, as the result of his delay, he sinks into a watery grave. You exclaim: "How foolish he was; why did he not escape with the others?" Alas! hundreds have dropped into the pit of the lost, by delaying. Folly of follies! Misfortune of misfortunes!

I want to see this audience making an immediate start for the safety-rock. I want to hear the cry:—

"Rock of ages, cleft for me!  
Let me hide myself in Thee!"

God will help you to snap in pieces those chains that bind you to earth. When you go home, enter your chamber, and pour out your

soul in earnest prayer to the Saviour, that he may have mercy upon you, and save you. Let to-night be a turning point in your history. Be determined, through God's grace, to reach the "Promised Land." Angels bend over you lovingly, and are eager to carry to the skies the glad news of your conversion. Awake! now from slumber, and act as for eternity!—act "in the living present." Time is precious and fleeting, and should be improved. When Elizabeth, Queen of England, was upon her death-bed, she cried out and said: "Millions of money for an inch of time!" Ah! she had wasted more than half a century. While she reclined on a couch of royalty, bitterness, like an arrow, lodged fast in her bosom. Her splendid surroundings; her wardrobe, which, it is said, contained ten thousand dresses; her extensive kingdom,—these could not take away her misery, in her last moments. Then, I warn you not to squander the precious moments. Only the present is yours, the future you cannot claim.

Oh! that now the veil of unbelief were removed from your eyes, that you might behold

with inward satisfaction and holy rapture, the Friend of sinners—the Saviour of mankind. That being removed, your joy would be indescribable. Your heart would throb with a heavenly ecstasy. Your eye would brighten into a lambent flame. Your step would acquire fresh elasticity; and from your inmost soul there would go up to heaven's throne strains of sacred adoration. And the glistening multitudes of angelic beings would rise, while harp would be struck, and organ would breathe out its grand prelude; and now the sudden outbreak of song would flood the celestial realms with harmony overpowering and divine.

O! my hearer, reach out your hand, and pluck those unfading flowers that grow for you on Calvary's summit. Let Jesus place upon your brow the chaplet of forgiveness. The hall of spiritual feasting is enlivened with the presence of a thousand guests, and you may be one of the number. Now pass into the banquet while the doors stand open for your reception.

## LITERATURE THAT KILLS.

“For death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces, to cut off the children from without, and the young men from the streets.—*Jeremiah* ix., 21.

A BITTER calamity has fallen upon the Jews, because of their disobedience. God's anger is kindled against them, and he says: “I will make Jerusalem heaps, and a den of dragons.” Confusion, destruction, and death are among the people. They have forsaken God's law, and disobeyed his voice, and walked after the imagination of their own hearts, and now they must suffer. Hear the lamentation and wailing! “For death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces, to cut off the children from without, and the young men from the streets.”

Now, bear with me for a short time, while I call your attention to a bitter calamity of the present day. I have reference to the sad effects of sensational, impure literature upon

the young and rising generation. To the pure Press we cheerfully say, God-speed; but to the Satanic Press, we say, Be thou cursed forever! Frank Leslie, it is supposed, prints, at least, half a million of his various papers every week; and sixty per cent. of that reading matter is trash; thirty per cent. is gross immorality; and only ten per cent. is valuable information! Another firm publishes the *New York Weekly*, which has a circulation of about 350,000, and which is replete with "blood and thunder" stories so hurtful to the young. In the city of New York alone, there are "forty papers having a weekly circulation of about 1,200,000 copies, all of which have a demoralizing tendency." But New York is but one of many cities that are sending abroad the fetid smell from putrid pools of impure literature. The souls of children are poisoned by means of these licentious publications. Young men get hold of them, and shortly they are educated for rogues and murderers. They march in the foremost ranks of those mighty armies of depraved wretches who are ever ready to perpetrate the most atrocious deeds.



“For death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces, to cut off the children from without, and the young men from the streets.”

I remark, first, that *impure literature is a source of a large percentage of crime*. When young Pomeroy, “the boy murderer,” was in his cell, under the sentence of death, he confessed to a visitor that he had read sixty dime novels, all about scalping and other murderous actions, and he believed these books had put the thoughts into his mind which led to his horrible acts in destroying human life. To-day there are multitudes confined in prison cells, who were sent there directly or indirectly by sensational and pernicious weeklies, or such books as *Oliver Optic’s*. How very susceptible the youthful mind is to evil impressions. And impure literature is just adapted to convey such impressions. It carries on the work of death with great rapidity. Night and day this work goes on. Printing presses moving continually, and sending abroad the wormwood and the gall. “For death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our

palaces, to cut off the children from without, and the young men from the streets."

Evil impressions made on the minds of the young, are not easily removed. They hold on with the tenacity of the horse-leech, till every honest, noble principle is entirely uprooted, and the mind perverted forever in numerous cases. Some parents cannot see any harm in light, unchaste, trash literature; and they admit such reading into their families, allow their children to gorge themselves with the poison it carries with it, and, what is still worse, they feel proud and elated because they have children so studious! Ah! little do they know of the impurity that is between the gaudy and bewitching covers of those books which are thrown broadcast by the Satanic press of our country. Little do they see or hear of the sad effects produced by the wide circulation of demoralizing weekly papers among boys and girls, and young men and maidens. But they will soon see the effects on the minds of their own offspring. Their education, in this respect, will not be neglected. They take advantage of every oppor-

tunity for storing their minds with boyish love stories, or thrilling histories of terrible heroes and beautiful heroines, or with an account of how the scheme was formed which led to the capture of an Evangeline, and the murder of her brave lover. Long after midnight the lamp is burning in their chamber, and the youthful student all the while pores over those bad books; then, nervous and pale and exhausted, he throws himself upon his bed, only to be disturbed by troublesome dreams. And thus the youth are being educated, and made familiar with the arts of Satan. Then, with minds fully replenished with this sort of knowledge, they start out in life. Dime novels, one in each pocket, are the only guide they have; but, alas! they are a guide to villainy, murder and death;—a guide to crime, then to the cold cell, then to the gallows.

Our cities are pestered with multitudes of vagabonds who do nothing else but read exciting, impolite literature, frequent gambling houses and brothels, and commit all sorts of crimes! When the mind is depraved, look out

for the actions! Actions bear a semblance to the mind, so that if the actor possess a corrupt mind, his actions will be corrupt in their nature. Now, whatever contaminates the mind should be condemned; and I have endeavored to prove to you that novels of "blood-and-thunder," and that sensational weeklies, etc., contaminate the mind; therefore, the conclusion is, that they should be condemned. I tell you, if all persons would trample such literature beneath their feet, the event would shorten the long lists of crimes shown by police statistics, and would save millions who are now growing up to manhood and womanhood, and who must take the field after the present armies shall have fallen!

Again: *Impure literature is a source of much domestic grief.* Mothers have wept in secret, because their children, whom they endeavored to train up in the right way, were being injured with pernicious reading. Once they had no occasion to weep on this account, for then the delusive charm of wicked books had not been thrown around them, to allure them from the pathway of virtue to that of

vice. Then, their minds were entirely free from the pollution ejected by the press of Satan. The sweet innocence of their tender youth shone through their actions and faces, in all its attractiveness, like as the dazzling sunbeams shine benignly through the forest's foliage, on a bright summer's morning. In their homes love was peacefully enshrined; cheerfulness suffered no sorrow to enter; and parents exulted in the prospect of seeing their sons and daughters filling high stations in life. But, alas! love loses its warmth; and merriment turns into grief; and brightest hopes are blasted! The destroying angel of demoralizing literature has flown over these homes; and its black, broad wings have carried bitterness and death into once happy families. Young men, who would have shone in society, and would have been a blessing to their fellow-men, but for evil literature, have fallen never to rise. And intelligent young women have suffered the same sad fate. Family circles broken! Domestic ties snapped! The beauty and innocence of youth gone forever! Hearts deeply wounded!



There is no happier place on earth than home, if love is there. It is our terrestrial heaven! I hear no sweeter sounds than those I heard when at home. No other voice arouses within me emotions so joyous as those awakened by my mother's voice. It is not pageantry, nor boundless wealth that makes home. The abode may be a stately palace, having all the palatial adornments the mind could possibly conceive, and still it might not have the pleasures of home,—still it might lack that which is absolutely essential to home enjoyment. Home is where a mother's smiles and tears of tenderness are seen, where is found the circle of our nearest and dearest relatives, and where each one strives, in every possible way, to enhance the happiness of one another. Home, then, is a sacred spot; and oh, how terrible, when its sanctity and sweetness are destroyed! How sad, when the heart-ache is brought there, and

“From love's shining circle the gems drop away.”

How heart-rending when the foul hand of unchaste, iniquitous literature is laid upon the

young, and beautiful, and virtuous, to cast dark shadows over their future lives, and brand them with shame. Weep, fathers!—weep, mothers, for the perishing youth of our land! “For death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces, to cut off the children from without, and the young men from the streets.”

Further: *Impure literature produces temporary insanity.* Now-a-days bad books and papers are made so attractive as to infatuate their readers to so high a degree, that they actually know nothing of their circumstances, or of what is occurring around them. In mind, they are pacing the deck of some phantom ship, or making their escape from robbers, through some wild and lonely forest, or wandering among the ruins of some ancient castle, where perhaps the most horrible and bloody deeds ever heard of, were perpetrated,—deeds, compared to which, Macbeth and Hamlet are only shadows! So stupefied and demented are they that they are unable to accomplish anything, either for themselves or others. They cannot deal with the actual and the tangible;



—these have no charms for them. There is a mental craving, a terrible thirsting for something shadowy and unreal! They do not value a mother's smiles; their own fireside holds out no inducements that will cause them to cling fondly to the old home; the laughing faces of little brothers and sisters cannot cheer them. Oh! I pity the young man and young woman who are so mentally deranged by sensational literature, that home, "sweet home," has no attractions for them.

A young man who committed suicide in Indiana, ascribed his downfall to the "vilest kind of novels," which he was allowed to read when eight or nine years old. Oliver Goldsmith, the poet and novelist, says: "Above all, never let your son touch a novel or romance. How delusive, how destructive, are these features of consummate bliss! They teach the youthful mind to sigh after beauty and happiness that never existed, to despise the little good that Fortune has mixed in our cup, by expecting more than she ever gave." May the mighty power of the eternal God hurl out of existence the Satanic Press, whose

productions are stamped with pollution and death.

I remark, finally, that *impure literature debars its readers from entering heaven*. Sensational and demoralizing books are just so many allurements presented by the devil, to lead the young down to eternal darkness. "The Pathway to Hell!" ought to be the title to many books now circulated. Did you ever meet with a person who, while under the influence of such books, was giving "all diligence to make his peace with God, and his calling and election sure?" Never! O, it is too true that literature of this nature has shut and bolted the door of heaven right in the faces of multitudes. They did not attempt to make preparation for death and eternity, till it was too late. Their time was not God's time. The ship which had long been waiting in the harbor, to carry them to the haven of celestial bliss, sailed off without them. The whistle blew, the flags floated from the mast-head, the cannons boomed, and still they remained unconcerned. Then they heard the dreadful words:—"Because I have called, and

ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh."

If there are before me readers of unwholesome and vicious literature, let me, as a lover of your souls, persuade you to desist, now and forever, your work of self-destruction, before the words *Too late! Too late!* proclaim your miserable fate. How sad if your end should be like that of Francis Spira, who exclaimed, just before death: "My sin is greater than the mercy of God. I have denied Christ voluntarily; I feel that he hardens me, and allows me no hope;" or like that of Charles IX, who expired, bathed in his own blood, whilst he said: "What blood! what murders! I know not where I am. How will all this end? What shall I do? I am lost forever!"

Novels are poor material on which to build the eternal interests of the soul. In death they can afford us no solace nor satisfaction. They cannot quell the palpitating heart, nor wipe away the death-dew from the brow of

marble coldness, nor soften the pillow, nor hinder the flow of tears, nor give you courage to cross Jordan's waters, nor administer to you an entrance into mansions of glory. Oh, no! But they throw dismal shadows around the death-bed of him, who, during life, centered his heart's affections in them, to the neglect of the soul's salvation.

In conclusion, I ask you to read that literature which is ennobling to the mind, purifying to morals, and profitable to the soul. Happily, we have a press of an exalted character; not one that ejects corruption and death; but a press whose productions are entirely free from iniquity, and are characterized by sublime thought which leads the mind upward and heavenward. Mothers, fathers, strew your homes with this kind of reading. Let the parlor table and book-case be adorned with it; and your children, in after years, will bless you. Yes, pure literature makes happy homes, smiling faces, and intelligent looks. It brings with it a fragrance sweeter than that which is wafted to us on the wings of summer zephyrs. It radiates the home circle with a heavenly

light, kindles within the bosom feelings of ecstasy, and is a means of preserving love and harmony, without which there is no real enjoyment.

The men who have accomplished most for the uplifting of humanity and the proper culture of the mind, have not been in the habit of reading sensational, wishy-washy, silly stories. There are wholesome novels within reach. How many have been benefitted beyond measure by a draught of the noble sentiments of such men as Scott, Dickens and Thackeray. Then, would you be useful, would you be mighty, would you be an ornament to society, would you leave behind you a name around which clusters of pleasant memories will fondly cling, would you strike the harp with seraphim and cherubim, in the realms celestial; then carefully read and thoroughly digest the noblest thoughts from the noblest minds; and leave, untouched, the sensational, the demoralizing, and the insignificant.



## SABBATH DESECRATION.

“Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.”—*Exodus*  
xx., 8.

THE commandment, embraced in the words of our text, is one link of that beautiful chain of commandments which Moses received from God. It is a commandment, also, that is not unfamiliar to us; and yet how very frequently it is violated! Every seventh day it is broken by hundreds—yea, thousands—yea, millions. Its violators are found in the magnificent and overflowing city, in the smallest village, out on the wild, extensive prairie, in the dense and lonely forest, as well as far out upon the heaving and trackless ocean. Those who dishonor the Sabbath, knowingly and wilfully, are inexcusable, even though they be so situated that it is impossible for them to hear the monotonous din of city life, or the sweet chiming of chapel bells on Sabbath morn, or

the thundering tones of the great pipe organ, or the eloquent and soul-stirring words of distinguished pulpit orators! God is not to be mocked. He did not give us commandments to have them broken. Laws authoritatively made for the government of our country must be faithfully executed. Before our President enters on the duties of his office, he is necessitated to take this oath: "I do solemnly swear, that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." Now, who is the author of the Moral Law, or Ten Commandments? God, the Infinite and Eternal. And who is there so profane as to deny that God had a perfect right to make such a law? Then, we affirm that this law was authoritatively formed; and how perfect and comprehensive this constitution! It is worthy to be preserved, protected and defended, because it is of Divine origin; and the keeping of it will afford us present and future happiness. But how many have lost happiness that they can never regain, because of



having violated the commandments of the eternal God. I shall, however, speak of the violation of the fourth commandment only:—  
“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.”

I remark, first, that *the Sabbath is desecrated by the performance of unlawful work*. Every rational thinker cannot but see the wisdom of God in appointing one day out of the seven, as a day of rest from hard toil. When a man labors in the counting-house, or editor's room, or out-doors, from Monday morning till Saturday night (hours for sleep excepted), it is high time for him to cease working. The brain is not made of whalebone, nor the body composed of iron. After a certain amount of labor the mind will become flaggy and useless, and the physical constitution will sink under the great burden imposed upon it. So we see how needful it is that the laborer, mental or physical, should discontinue his efforts, at regular intervals. Now, a perfect plan has been made out, by which it will be seen that the laborer can have the necessary rest, and that, too, at proper times—every seventh day. The arrangement of this plan is eminently suited to

the necessities of the human family. Should not the toiler rejoice because the law favors him by saying: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day. Wherefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

But how many crush this portion of the law beneath their feet, defying God, and exposing themselves to His just indignation! On the Sabbath day the merchant makes out his list for a fresh stock; the speculator sums up the profits and losses of the week; the architect originates some new design of a structure; the printer knocks off so many thousand copies of his paper; railroad companies send off their engines at full steam; and owners of floating property must see that their boats

leave their moorings and dash out upon the wave. And this frightful desecration of the Sabbath must be attributed to that passionate love which men have for the mighty dollar! They say: "Sunday or no Sunday, we must not let our chances of making money slip away from our grasp!" No! here is the way to put it. "Let my soul be lost or not, I'm determined to make money. My religion is *dollars and cents*." Mr. Gladstone says: "Believing in the authority of the Lord's day as a religious institution, I must, as a matter of course, desire the recognition of that authority by others. But, over and above this, I have myself, in the course of a laborious life, signally experienced both its mental and its physical benefits. I can hardly overrate its value in this view, and for the interest of the workingmen of this country, alike in these and in other yet higher respects, there is nothing I more anxiously desire than that they should more and more highly appreciate the Christian day of rest."

But those who break the Sabbath, frequently tell us that their position or business

in life is of such a nature that they cannot, without making a great sacrifice, avoid doing secular work on the Sabbath. Then, I say, however great the sacrifice, let it be made. The Queen of England will not allow matters of State to encroach upon holy time, not even matters presented by the nobility. All honor to Her Majesty for her christian observance of the Lord's day. It's all nonsense for men to say they are compelled to give attention to business on Sabbath, or that they would have to make an enormous sacrifice in order to keep this day holy. Why, they would only have to sacrifice wrong principles; and certainly the loss would not be so great after all. We can afford to part with a few base principles. Then let not God be robbed of his day; let not its sanctity be destroyed by the performance of unlawful work; but let us honor God and keep sacred the Sabbath, by throwing aside, for the time, all those matters which can well be attended to on other days.

Again: I remark that, *the Sabbath is desecrated by the encouragement of indolence*. An indolent person dishonors the Lord's day.

Many individuals regard Sabbath as merely a day of cessation from secular toil; and so, when Saturday night comes, they abandon work only to idly waste the precious hours of the following day. Hence, such persons are urged to relinquish secular labor, not by a love for the Divine Being, but by selfish motives. I ask, Was the Sabbath instituted to encourage laziness? No! For what purpose, then, was it instituted? For the purpose of meeting the exigencies of mankind, and giving glory and honor to Him whose day it is. Could you receive a present from a friend, without feeling grateful, and expressing to the donor your thanks? Well, the Sabbath is God's "special present to the working man"; and shall not the receipt of this priceless gift be gratefully acknowledged by the recipient? Shall man receive and enjoy the blessings of fifty-two or more Sabbaths each year, for a quarter, or half, or three-fourths of a century, and not thank and

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow"?

Shall man allow the hours of the hallowed day to pass away unimproved, while the angel

3



of Death, with sickle in hand, is cutting down the robust person, or the promising young man, or the fair young woman, or the sweet-faced, laughing child who was the delight of his father, the companion of his mother, the joy of the home circle?

On the Sabbath day, there should arise to the great white throne, the sincere thanks and ardent prayers of every human being; places of worship, that are almost empty, should be crowded, even to the entrance, with earnest worshippers; prayer-meetings and class-meetings should be the attractions of the now careless multitudes;—Sabbath-schools should engage the attention of the mighty masses of juveniles and adults who never see the interior of a school-room, nor hear the ringing melody produced by infant voices. But, alas! what do we behold? We behold Indolence on our right hand, on our left, before, and behind us. There are sleepers who should be aroused from their horrible torpitude, before there falls upon their ear the muffled sound of the drum which will beat to the “Dead March,” announcing their departure into another world!

Let the indolent take warning! Your Sabbath must terminate, sooner or later. You are not holding the reins of Time, nor retaining within your nature the principle of life! Away into the future you look; but it's all uncertainty. The thick veil of your mortality, conceals from your vision the solemn and mysterious futurity. From the harp of your dying nature, there will yet breathe out a wild, wild cadence—the closing strain in life's song; and then the future will flash upon your sight, either like the light of a beautiful summer morning, or the deep, frightful gloom of midnight! I pray that it may come flashing upon you and around you, with sheenful brightness and dazzling splendour, thus enabling you to clearly

“Behold that land of pure delight,  
Where saints immortal reign.”

In the last place, I remark, that *the Sabbath is desecrated by the indulgence in secular amusement*. My mental eye sees two pathways—one, the pathway of Sabbath-keepers; the other, that of Sabbath-breakers. The former pathway leads to eternal life and



sweetest pleasures. All who walk in it are safe. The latter pathway leads to dismal death and extreme pain. Hundreds—thousands—are rushing along it, some indulging in one amusement, and some in another. Onward to death, they are madly hastening, while the church bell rings out an earnest invitation for them to worship God,—while the good are assembling to hear the glad news of salvation for all mankind,—while words of warning are being uttered from a thousand pulpits! Onward they speed to everlasting ruin, allured there by secular amusement, with which they endeavor to gratify themselves, at the peril of their souls. “Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment.” At one time there was a fire broke out in a lunatic asylum, and as the deliverers were passing from room to room, rescuing the poor creatures from death, they discovered one pitiable maniac sitting, rubbing his hands with delight,

looking at the blazing rafters above his head, and enjoying the frightful scene. He did not realize the danger; and had he sat but a few moments longer, the blazing timbers would have fallen upon him with a terrible crash, and he would have perished among the burning ruins. And so it is with those who indulge in secular amusement on the Sabbath day. They laugh wildly amid their sinful pleasures and sports; but just above their heads is the fiery indignation of an offended God; and, quick as a flash, the flames of retribution catch hold of them, their wild laughter changes into the most heart-rending shrieks, which grow fainter and fainter, till at last a death-like stillness reigns, and the lifeless forms of the unfortunates are borne along to the lone graveyard! O, weep for the fallen!

In the winter season the skating-rink is the favorite place of resort for hundreds on the Sabbath day; and in the summer season the woods are made to echo, and the Sabbath is desecrated, by the reports of the sportsman's gun. But how many other amusements divert the attention of the masses on Sunday! Let

me warn the young men not to allow the fascinations of any of these worldly amusements to cause you to dishonor the Lord's day, or drag your souls into eternal perdition. Take a bold and decided stand against everything that would mar the sacredness of the Sabbath. Be loyal to the King of kings.

It has often grieved me to see young men of honorable and Christian parentage, associating with the disreputable throng, and going forth to do evil on the Sabbath. These young men received from their parents a good moral and religious training. They were taught to kneel at the family altar, and to offer private prayer in their chamber before retiring to rest, and after rising. Then, when Sabbath came round and the time for public worship arrived, they were seated in the family pew, and engaging in Divine service. And when the time would come for conducting the Sabbath-school, their places in the Bible-class were not vacant. When they took their departure from home, and bade farewell to father and mother, their parents' blessing rested upon them, and their parents' earnest prayers for the safety of

their sons, followed them. But after a while, the custom they acquired at home, of praying night and morning, is entirely abandoned; the habit of attending church is also thrown aside; and their places in the Bible-class are empty. Now, they are on the highway to destruction! They are seeking for gratification in secular amusement. Duty is forgotten! Advice is discarded! Christian principles are sacrificed! Self-respect is quenched! and mothers shed bitter tears; and fathers mourn, and the Holy Spirit grieves!

I pity the Sabbath-breaker, because he is in extreme danger. He stands on unsafe footing, and far below him rushes a torrent of death, more awful than Niagara, and around him rises the cold spray of immediate destruction. Still he stands unconcerned. Above the roar of the tempestuous waters, he hears cries of warning from the shore. Still he is unmoved. Deep down plays in wild shapes the tremendous vortex, louder grows the cataract, till its sonorous thunderings suddenly awaken the Sabbath-breaker to a realization of the perilousness of his position. He makes a frantic

effort to escape; but it's too late—everlastingly too late! He slips—he falls—he shrieks! Heaven trembles; Hell rejoices. An immortal soul drops into an abyss of darkness and horror, where there are no Sabbaths to be observed, nor places of worship to attend, nor sacred duties to perform! Worst of all ends! Saddest of deaths! Blackest of calamities! “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.”





## THE GREAT DEFILER.

“ But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat, nor with the wine which he drank.”—*Daniel* I., VIII.

DANIEL was the wisest, the holiest, and the most patriotic man the world ever knew. Like a bright luminary, he was suddenly raised up by God to disperse the spiritual, moral, and intellectual darkness which hung over humanity. The character and wisdom of this Prophet were such as to excite the admiration and draw out the sympathies of thousands. He was the hero of heroes, and the prophet of prophets. He risked his life by expounding to Nebuchadnezzar his dream which announced the overthrow of the Babylonian Empire; and he also interpreted the handwriting that appeared on the wall of Belshazzar’s palace, foretelling the destruction of the magnificent city of Babylon. As a great statesman, also, Daniel sustained his reputation for more than sixty years; and even his enemies confessed that he discharged the important duties of

that office with " consummate wisdom, benevolence, and justice." His marvelous deliverance from the lions affords us ample proof of his integrity and devotion to God. But we have another proof of his Christian integrity in his bold refusal to drink of the king's wine. When we consider the circumstances under which Daniel was placed at the time of his non-acceptance of this beverage, we cannot say otherwise than that he was an exemplary character. Although wine was a favorite drink to Nebuchadnezzar, yet Daniel, who in everything acted conscientiously, resolved not to use it, knowing it to be injurious. It mattered but little to him whether his refusal offended any one, for he had " purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself " with intoxicating drink.

In the first place, I remark that *strong drink is defiling to the morals*. There are but few evils, if any, which are productive of more immorality, than the wide-spread evil of intemperance. Overflowing prison-houses, the long lists of crimes shown by our newspapers—these make known to us the sad, sad fact that the



liquor-fiend defiles the morals. How many drunkards have testified that before the glass touched their lips, they were highly respected and esteemed because of their nobleness of character. Yes, until rum corrupted their morals, they were useful and respectable men. Love and honesty were vividly portrayed in their countenances, all their actions were consistent and generous, and even the words they spoke betokened moral excellence. But no sooner did they touch and taste the unclean thing than the work of corruption commenced, and secretly it continued, till hatred took the place of love, till dishonesty took the place of uprightness, till vice took the place of virtue.

Go into the cells of our prisons, and ask the question,—“What brought you here?” and from nearly every prisoner, you will receive this answer:—“Whiskey brought me here!” It has been estimated that intoxicating liquors are an agent in three-fourths of the crimes committed in large cities. In the year 1872, there were 83,514 arrests made in New York city; and out of this number nearly 70,000 were traceable to persons more or less addicted to drink.

Moral excellence is a priceless gem, and all persons should strive to attain to it. But should not that man be pitied who is so enslaved by liquor, that he does not value this goodness of character? Friends, this destroyer of morals—this curse of nations—this evil of evils, should have our fiercest opposition. When virtue is dead, every treacherous and devilish principle comes to life. When the morals of a nation are corrupted, national disturbance and crime and irregularity ensue. When a city is characterized by depravity and pollution, then that city is a Sodom or a Gomorrah.

Again: *strong drink is a destroyer of the intellect.* It is the intellectual faculties which make man what he is—a wonder and a power. Man's intellect contrived a plan for the carrying on of trade between remote countries, separated from one another by angry oceans; man's intellect made those important scientific discoveries without which our world would not be what it is to-day! How vast and beneficial have been the results of Morse's invention of the system of telegraphing! What blessings have

been conferred upon us by William Caxton, the father of the English press! What glorious achievements have been effected by the steam engine, invented by James Watt, whose name has been immortalized! Man's intellect is mightier than embattled millions; more valuable than countless worlds of wealth; deeper than ten thousand oceans in one!

But the mind is rendered inactive by the use of hell's burning beverage—intoxicating drink. This beverage has stopped, forever, the machinery of the most gigantic minds. And that we may be assured of the truthfulness of this assertion, we have but to think of E. Allan Poe, and of hundreds of others whose intellects have been wrecked, and whose lights have been extinguished, by alcoholic stimulants. Ah, yes! the contents of the chalice have cruelly smitten the poetic genius; and the hand that penned immortal verse has relinquished the pen, never more to record sublime and happy thought! The intellect of him who creditably occupied the sacred desk, has been weakened by the use of intoxicating liquors; and the stream of eloquence which

poured forth from the speaker's lips, has ceased to flow; the voice that hundreds delighted to listen to rings out no more within the walls of the sanctuary; the face that once shone from the pulpit, with expressions of love and tenderness, does not now cheer the congregation.

A young minister of great ability, was invited to take tea with some of his senior brethren, whom I know by reputation, and who are not, by any means, unimportant. When they were seated at the table, wine was passed round by the oldest and most distinguished minister present. The young man had been a hard drinker previous to his entering the ministry, but was reclaimed; and for a number of years he had not tasted strong drink of any kind. When in company, however, with eminent clergymen, and not wishing to be thought singular in his habits on that evening, he accepted and drank of the wine which was handed round. After the friends separated to go to their homes, this young minister had occasion to pass along a street which was lighted up with the sparkling brightness of

gay saloons; and just as he was opposite the open door of a saloon, and the stench of the bar-room met him, the old appetite returned. He had not sufficient strength of purpose to resist the temptation, and entering the saloon, he called for a glass of brandy, paid for it, drank it, and then walked out. He had not gone far before he had a still stronger desire for liquor. A second time he called for brandy; and shortly after drinking it, his brain became fired; and at the solemn hour of midnight, when only the light of the street lamps could be seen, that young man of bright talents, who but a few hours before ranked high, fell into the gutter in a state of unconsciousness. When the grey light of morning hovered around, he was seen and recognized by a friend, who immediately secured medical aid, and carefully watched over him till he got better. But soon he fell again, never to rise! Borrowing a large sum of money from some members of his congregation, he proceeded from Canada, where he had been preaching, and entered New York City, where he was seized with delirium tremens, from which he



never recovered. Not long before his death, he wrote, with unsteady hand, a letter to one of the ministers with whom he took tea on the evening of his downfall, and the last words in his letter were these:—"I'm lost, eternally lost! The wine that was handed round when we took tea together, has been my everlasting ruin! Farewell! farewell!"

But, in order to convince you more fully that the use of alcoholic liquors, as a beverage, is injurious mentally, I wish to state that I have in my possession the most reliable liquor statistics, showing that within the United States alone, in the year 1872, intemperance manufactured no less than 30,000 maniacs and idiots! What a fearful wreckage of the intellect! Husbands torn from their homes, and conveyed into the lunatic asylum, where they must eke out a miserable existence. Mothers separated from their children, to be shut in by a huge stone wall for long years. Reason dethroned! Happiness gone! Life a sad vacuity! "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the



last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.”

Further: *strong drink is injurious to the body*. Notwithstanding the oft-quoted expression, “Doctors differ,” happily the most eminent physicians agree in their opinions concerning the use of alcoholic stimulants as a beverage or a medicine. They maintain and clearly prove “that all alcoholic liquors, in whatever form or amount, when taken by persons in health, are injurious and dangerous physically, mentally, and morally; and that in disease, cases are very much fewer than was formerly taught by medical teachers and writers, or than is generally supposed, where such liquors are useful as a medicine, even for temporary effects, and that in no case can their long continued or habitual use fail to do harm.”

In 1873, the New York National Temperance Society circulated the following declaration, which was signed by about two hundred leading physicians, surgeons, etc., of New York and Brooklyn:

1. “In view of the alarming prevalence and

ill effects of intemperance, with which none are so familiar as members of the medical profession, and which have called forth from eminent English physicians the voice of warning to the people of Great Britain, concerning the use of alcoholic beverages, we, the undersigned, members of the medical profession of New York and vicinity, unite in the declaration that we believe alcohol should be classed with other powerful drugs; that when prescribed medicinally, it should be with conscientious caution and a sense of grave responsibility.

2. We are of the opinion that the use of alcoholic liquors, as a beverage, is productive of a large amount of physical disease; that it entails diseased appetites upon offspring; and that it is the cause of a large percentage of the crime and pauperism of our cities and country.

3. We would welcome any judicious and effective legislation—State and national—which would seek to confine the traffic in alcohol to the legitimate purposes of medical and other sciences, art and mechanism.”

Now, we have, in this declaration, the most potent arguments against the use of alcoholic stimulants as a beverage. But are not the reeling form, and bloodshot eyes, and bloated face, and tattered apparel of the drunkard, also weighty arguments against using it to gratify the appetite? I tell you, the effects of habitual liquor-drinking are easily seen. They cannot be concealed. Nervous prostration, a decrease of the powers of the muscular system; these are the effects of the frequent and constant use of intoxicating drinks upon the physical constitution; and it is a sad fact that hundreds of drunkards are falling into drunkards' graves, hurried there by bodily diseases which were implanted in them by using fermented liquors.

Finally, I remark, that *strong drink brings disaster upon the immortal soul*. The loss of the soul is the greatest and most severe of all losses. We may lose the nearest relatives and every bosom friend; we may be entirely deserted by those who once smiled upon us; we may be stripped of every earthly comfort, and sent adrift, sad and alone, upon the stormy

billows of this life, frowned on and passed by uncharitable strangers, while our frail bark drifts hither and thither by every cruel blast, and the wild night increases our fears, and the absence of friendly lights drives us to despair: these losses we may experience, but how trivial they are when compared to the loss of the immortal soul! The soul, once lost, can never be regained. Even should an eternity be spent in bitter crying for its restoration, still it would remain lost. Angels could not restore it. Forever it must stay in deepest gloom, far from the festal illumination of the celestial city.

Now, every hour, intemperance is sending souls to eternal woe! How many unfortunates pass off the stage of action, while in a drunken stupor or in delirium tremens! How many drunkards are killed by accidents, while in a state of intoxication! and the Bible says no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God. It is often the case, that the first glass of liquor, taken as a beverage, is the devil's first installment, as security for the immortal soul. The more frequent the payments, the

sooner will he have the soul forever in his clutches. O, why will people sell their souls to Satan for strong drink? Why will they madly hasten down that broad, inclined plane of intemperance, until they at last fall into the awful whirlpool of death? A man who had a valuable diamond was foolishly playing with it by throwing it over the side of the ship, and catching it, as he leaned over the bulwarks. A friend tried to persuade him to cease playing in such a manner with the precious diamond; but he said, "Oh, never fear, I've done it so often." Finally, he missed his aim, and the treasure dropped into the water and was lost beyond recall. Similarly are precious souls lost beyond recall by the folly of drinking alcoholic stimulants.

Would to God, that the fathers and mothers, and young men and young women, who are to-day selling their souls for this beverage of hell—would to God that these poor sufferers would snap in pieces the clanking chains of intemperance, and come out into the enjoyment of liberty, and, like a brave Daniel, purpose in their hearts, never to defile themselves



with the poisonous liquid. Then what a pleasing change would take place. Homes that have long been the dens of want, wretchedness and infamy, would become cheery and respectable; new, clean clothing would supersede rags; dissipated looks would vanish; manly independence, and self-respect, and good name, would return; drunkards' graves would be avoided, and souls would escape eternal death. And then what joy there would be among the angels in heaven. Seraphic strains, swelling forth in sweetest harmony, would make the celestial arches ring, while angel fingers would bring from golden harps music unsurpassed by any invented by the skill of human genius.

May the day speedily dawn upon this rum-cursed earth, when the glorious rays of Total Prohibition shall fall benignly upon us, to scatter the darkness which hangs over millions of the human family, and to raise the fallen to sobriety, virtue, and heaven! God speed the day!



## SPIRITUAL DESTITUTION.

“One thing thou lackest.”—*Mark* x., 21.

GEORGE WHITFIELD, who has been styled the “Prince of Pulpit Orators,” stopped for several days at the house of a General. The General and lady, also their four children, were serious but not religious. They were moralists. Whitfield, while staying with them, departed from his usual custom, which was to address the residents of the house where he stayed, concerning the welfare of their souls. The last evening came, and the last night he was to spend there. He retired to rest; but the Spirit of God came to him in the night, saying: “O man of God! if these people perish, their blood be on thy head.” He listened; but the flesh said: “Do not speak to these people; they are so good and so kind, you could not say a harsh thing to them.” He arose and prayed. The per-

spiration rolled down his brow; and he was fearful and anxious. Finally, a happy thought rushed into his mind. He took his diamond ring from his finger, went up to the window, and wrote these words upon the glass: "One thing thou lackest." He had not courage to say a word to the inmates about religion. Immediately after Whitfield's departure from the house, the General, who had a great veneration for him, went into the room he had occupied, and the first thing that attracted his attention was the sentence upon the window pane, "One thing thou lackest"; and, that being his case, these words led to his conversion. This General was a moral man; but mere morality will not bring salvation to the soul. Doubtless, he possessed many excellent traits of character; still, there was one thing he did not possess, and that was the assurance that he was a child of God; that Jesus Christ loved him, and gave himself for him; that all his sins were blotted out, and that he was reconciled to God.

The words of my text were spoken by the Saviour, in addressing a rich young man, who

went to him to find out what he should do, in order to be saved from sin, and inherit eternal life. And Christ referred him back to the Ten Commandments; but the young man said: "All these have I observed from my youth." Then Jesus replied by saying: "One thing thou lackest; go thy way; sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up thy cross and follow me." This was a hard requirement, and the rich youth revolted at the idea of yielding to it, for he was very wealthy. When he was put to the test, it was found that he loved the world more than he loved God. Anything else he would rather do than part with his vast possessions. He was greatly disappointed, because he was told to dispose of all he had, before he could be perfect. Indeed, he, like a great many others, had the impression that he could gain heaven by noble works, which is an utter impossibility. He occupied a high and honorable position, being ruler of the synagogue; that, however, would not insure his salvation. But, from the fact of his being a ruler, it would be reasonable to

infer that he was a young man of no limited education; but all his learning could not afford him a clear "title to mansions in the skies." That of the greatest importance was missing! Hence, our Saviour said to him: "One thing thou lackest."

I remark, in the first place, that *education will not supply spiritual lack*. You might be so familiar with the science of astronomy, as to be able to speak accurately of the appearance, size, shape, arrangement, distance, motions, physical constitution, etc., of the heavenly bodies. You might be so well versed in the science of music, as to possess Beethoven's rare faculties for musical composition; or to be qualified to produce an oratorio equal to Handel's "Israel"; or to have Von Bulow's extraordinary skill as a pianist. Your knowledge of natural philosophy might be so extensive, as to win for you the fame equal to that which was won by such men as Sir Isaac Newton, and Sir John Herschel. Your language might approach Shakspearian perfection. In short, you might be in possession of all the information the human mind is capable

of taking in and retaining, and still be in want of the one thing needful—salvation. The philosopher and astronomer, the poet and prose-writer, the judge and statesman—to each of these it may be said: “One thing thou lackest.” Education bears no relation whatever to the New Birth—to Regeneration—to that inward change which is commonly called conversion. And the man who imagines that his education will take him to heaven, is in error. Byron was educated; but from the account given of his death, it cannot be believed that he was prepared for the exit into another world.

Men have spent a whole life-time at their books, and in the end have died without a hope of heaven. They lacked one thing. When on earth, they ranked high and were honored, because of their intelligence; but among the holy angels, near God’s throne, they could take no position. When on earth, the productions of their pen, or the words which fell from their lips, kindled happy feelings within many bosoms; but in the New Jerusalem their voices are not heard. Ah,



no! Education will not supply spiritual lack. Paul says: " Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

I remark, further, that *social position will not supply spiritual lack*. How many build all their hopes on mere social position. They seek nothing beyond. Their highest aspiration is that they may become distinguished for their affluence and ostentatious display. Their hearts are set upon frescoed walls, colossal residences, magnificent arches bearing the finest figures that could be formed by artificer's genius; gorgeous show of silver plate, and costly pictures, and exquisite furniture, and glittering hangings. Oh, there is spiritual destitution in the grand residence,



as well as in the log cabin! Within tapestried walls, as well as within the walls of the rudest abode, there are perishing souls! Eternal death seizes those who are in the most elegant attire, as well as those who are in rags and filth. High social standing does not avail in respect to the soul. The vast wealth and splendid equipage of a Solomon, the fame of a Nebuchadnezzar—these fail to afford us the necessary provision for the great future. These fail to give us that peace which “passeth understanding”; these cannot throw open the pearly gates, nor permit us to view, with glad eyes, the city of God, with its jasper walls, and streets of gold, and its crystal waters, and its foundations of precious stones, and its festal lights, and its tree which bears twelve manner of fruits. High social position will not win for us the acclamation, “Well done, good and faithful servants; enter into the joy of your Lord.” We cannot ride to heaven in a two-thousand-dollar carriage, nor purchase a crown of glory with millions of money, nor associate with angels because we mingled, when on earth, with persons of dis-

inction! On the Judgment Day, when the books are opened, and the living and the dead shall assemble to be judged, there will be hundreds in that vast concourse, who had accumulated earthly, but not heavenly, treasures; and when they step tremblingly up to the bar, to be tried, methinks the Judge will say to each of them, what he said to the rich young man: "One thing thou lackest." But, at that late hour, it will be useless to attempt to supply that lack. All opportunities will have flown! The Holy Spirit will have ceased to strive! This earth will have undergone the most dreadful convulsions! It will be too late—everlastingly too late! The doom of the wicked will then have been sealed! Only the faithful followers of Jesus will be able to withstand the wreckage of matter and the crush of worlds. Affluence affords no real happiness to its possessor. It allures, but never satisfies; leads to distinction on earth, but to none in heaven; procures temporal, but not spiritual, luxuries.

There is a termination to a life of feasting and lordly exhibition. Where are the men,

who, centuries ago, opened wide the doors of their mansions, for the reception of the nobility? Their bones have intermingled with the dust, and the spacious banqueting-house, which once echoed with the sounds of midnight revelry, has lost its original grandeur and stateliness, and fallen to decay. A solemn silence lingers around that ruin, where once sweet music burst forth in awakening strains, to please the gay assembly. Once, a grand illumination; now, thick darkness. Once, a scene of merriment; now, one which excites melancholy. The pride and glory of the past now sleep, to wake no more. The animating song turned into a dirge; the ruddy cheek became pale, and the flashing eye closed in death. This is the end of "high life;" but the soul's existence will never close. The hand of Time has not power to crush out the life of the immortal soul. It lives on. Then why build on social position. It is a most unsafe foundation. Many have unfortunately built upon it; and the unsound fabric has tumbled, and they have been buried among the ruins! Away with the impression, if you

have it, that your future happiness depends on mere social position. Such an impression is only a delusion. The devil may say to you: "There is no danger; you have everything that is necessary to bring you to heaven." But God, who will be your Judge, says to you: "One thing thou lackest." May these words continue to ring in your ears, until you shall have found peace through believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Again, I remark, that *mere moral living will not supply spiritual lack*. Moralists have been compared to the carpenters who assisted Noah in the building of the ark, yet, after all, were drowned themselves. Bear in mind: I do not depreciate moral living; but morality alone will not take a man to heaven. Religion and morality must go together. As the anchor preserves the vessel from being wrecked upon the rocky coast during a storm, so religion saves you from that ruin which could not be escaped by mere morality. Drop religion, and you drop that which is absolutely essential to your eternal safety. You leave yourself without an anchor while sailing over

life's stormy billows; and the ship rolls and plunges; the sails are torn by the fierce gale, angry clouds gather, day is gone, and the night of death approaches. Then you realize the danger of your situation. The anchor, religion, is wanting. "One thing thou lackest."

"But," says some one, "I cannot recollect when I did anything contrary to the moral law. I have kept the Sabbath; have attended church as long as I can remember; have contributed willingly to every good cause; have afforded relief to suffering humanity," etc. That is all very well, so far as it goes, but have you experienced the New Birth? Have you been regenerated? The reason I ask you this, is because thus saith the Lord, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The Bible is so explicit in reference to this matter, that it is impossible to draw any other than one meaning. And if you have, in the past, been trying to get salvation by good works, I tell you that God and the Bible are against you, and therefore you are in error. Grasp the doctrine of salvation by faith in the Son of God. Trust in the merits of the atone-



ment, not in the merits of your actions. Cling to the cross.

“Be warned of your danger; escape to the *cross*;  
Your *only salvation* is there;  
Believe, and that moment the spirit of grace  
Will answer your penitent prayer.”

Standing, as I am, between the living and the dead, and in the presence of God, who will be my Judge, I dare not refuse to warn you of your danger. You and I will have to render an account of our stewardship; preacher, as well as hearer, must be judged; and oh, how sad, if on that judgment day the minister of the gospel should be accused of unfaithfulness in his sacred calling! Then I am bound to caution the ungodly person, and say to him, “One thing thou lackest.” If there are those who have been trying to reach heaven by any any other pathway than that of Faith, then it is my duty to tell them of their great mistake, and endeavor to lead them into the right way.

I shall not always be your pastor; and oh, what joy and satisfaction it would give me to see this entire congregation stepping forward to take a seat among the blood-washed at the



right hand of the Judge Supreme, after having received the plaudit, "Well done!" in presence of the congregated millions! That would be a beautiful spectacle. The most skillful painter could not produce a scene to equal it in grandeur. The orator's most glowing imagery would be utterly inadequate to convey to the mind even the faintest idea of that imposing sight. But, alas! if I should see you turned away from that august gathering, with this command, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;" if I should behold despair on your countenances, instead of joy, the sight, methinks, would be more than I could endure. God forbid that I should be compelled to view a scene so sad, so heart-rending, so woful! When the thunderings of the eternal God shall be heard in the clouds; when the angels' trumpet shall be sounded to raise the dead; when the Son of man shall appear, followed by a host of angelic escorts; when the great white throne shall be seen, and the mighty Judge shall take his seat thereon, and the books shall be opened,—when these important

circumstances occur, I pray that your loins may be girt about with truth, that you may have on the breastplate of righteousness, and that your feet may be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace! Begin now—this moment, to prepare for death, the judgment, and eternity; for remember, that “*one thing thou lackest.*”



## THE BROOKLYN CATASTROPHE.

"In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction.—*Isaiah* xxiv.,.12.

THE burning of the Brooklyn Theater, on the night of December 5th, has caused me to make a selection of these words for my text. Never, in the history of this country, has there occurred a more horrible catastrophe. The fire broke out during the last act of "The Two Orphans," and on the following morning the clearing parties who were at work in the *debris* uncovered a mass of over three hundred human victims. How crushing, and heart rending, and appalling, must the spectacle have been! The victims, it is said, were "woven together" into a fearful knot, twisted up into every attitude of suffering, with broken limbs, and "mangled flesh, and charred features, and dis-

“membered bodies.” The city of Brooklyn is in deep mourning. The youth, as well as those advanced in years, have been overwhelmed by the hundred, and sent into eternity in an instant. Sons and daughters who left their homes on Tuesday evening, will never return to shed gladness around the fireside. There were loving parents who, on that evening, imprinted the last kiss, and looked for the last time on the bright faces of little ones who were left at home in charge of the servants. Many an armchair was vacated, only to be occupied by strangers. Many a piano was closed, only to be kept silent throughout weeks of weeping and anguish. Many a sweet voice was, on that evening, hushed, nevermore to be heard on earth; and a loud wail is sent up from hundreds of ill-fated homes. The dirge swells in nearly all parts of the land, and sends a thrill of terror through countless multitudes. “In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction.”

I remark in the first place, that *we have, in this catastrophe, a forcible illustration of the uncertainty of life.* The many victims of the

fire left their respective homes, without even thinking of danger. They were in joyous eagerness to take their places in the theater, where they could gaze on the scenes to be presented, and hear what was to be said by the players. They surged along the streets of the city to the house of entertainment, unconscious of the destruction and death which were so soon to come upon them. They reached the entrance to the house of dazzling splendor, and some took their seats in the dress circle, and some in the gallery, and some in the parqu岸. They witnessed the scenes of the first act; and the scenes of the second act, and the scenes of the third act, and the scenes of the fourth act of the drama, "The Two Orphans." They also beheld the presentation of the last scene of the last act; and when they were giving breathless attention to Miss Kate Claxton, leading lady in the play, suddenly the cry of "Fire!" was heard, which sent a panic through the audience. Mr. Studley, one of the actors, stepped forward at this time, and said to the assembly, "The play will go on, and the fire will be put out. Be quiet! Get back into



your seats!" But few of the alarmed gathering heeded. They had already begun a stampede, and the main entrance became choked up, and women, and men, and boys, were trampled to death. By this time the entire stage was in flames; the scenery had shrivelled into tinder; the beams were falling on every side; the tongues of fire darted among, and over the heads of the audience; the cries of the frantic multitude were terrifying; and the scene was indescribable in horror, men and women in the agonies of a frightful death, the tempest of flame overwhelming human beings by the hundred.

How unexpected was this catastrophe! In about five minutes after the presentation of the last scene in the last act, the drama would have closed, and the curtain would have dropped, and the footlights would have been extinguished, and the entire audience would have left the building peacefully, had it not been for the breaking out of the fire. But alas! a scene, terrible in its reality, and awfully grand in its appearance, flashed before the enchanted auditory, and the preceding picture was for-



gotten, and over three hundred people were hurried into another world, and summoned to the bar of the eternal God. How many out of all that number were prepared for the transition, we are unable to say. There was not one person out of the number burned to death who did not expect to get out of the theater in safety, upon entering it. But oh! how uncertain is life! Death very often comes when it is least expected. It swooped down upon the worshippers in the "Laigh Kirk," of Kilmarnock, when the "great MacKinlay" was preaching. In 1863 it seized over two thousand persons on the occasion of the burning of the Jesuits' Church at Santiago. And in 1876 this same monster entered the Brooklyn Theater, wherein hundreds of spectators were convened, and slew young and old, the beautiful and promising, the refined and the unlettered. Death's spoils are found in every spot on earth. We find them in the decorated cathedral, in the imposing mansion, in the smallest hovel, on the battle-field and railroads, and they even lie in the bottom of the mighty ocean.

“O Death ! Thou great invisible,  
Pale monarch of the unending past,  
Who shall thy countless trophies tell,  
Or when shall be the last ?  
By thee high thrones to earth are flung—  
By thee the sword and sceptre rust—  
By thee the beautiful and young  
Lie mouldering in the dust.”

We are alive to-day; but we may be dead to-morrow. We are now acting our several parts in the wonderful drama of this life; but we know not how soon we shall present the last scene of the last act, nor when the curtain will drop, and the lights will go out, and we shall retire forever from the sublunary stage of action. We are now totally ignorant of the mysteries of that existence beyond the tomb; but we know not how soon such mysteries, together with their stern realities, will be revealed to us. How very numerous are the instances we have of the uncertainty of life! The proud ship, whose deck and cabin are thronged with human beings, leaves the port for a distant land. Those on board possess buoyant hopes, and light hearts, as they look forward to the time when the vessel shall sail, like a thing of life, into the harbor beyond,

and when there shall be the happy greeting of cherished ones; but alas! the treacherous sea causes the wreck of that ship, and passengers and crew find a watery grave ere the desired land is reached. The crowded train moves from the railroad station, dashes forward at frightful speed, and collides with another, or runs off the track, and, quick as a flash, hundreds of precious souls are sent into another world. In the midst of life we are in death. The voices of exhilarant ones are hushed; the beauty of youth and the glory of manhood disappear; joyous scenes change to scenes of mourning; and the sheenful light of pleasure, in which many have reposed, grows faint, till finally they are enveloped in impenetrable gloom!

Again: from this catastrophe we learn that *it is unquestionably necessary that we be prepared to meet death*. I cannot concur in the too prevalent opinion, that all persons, no matter what their moral or spiritual condition has been up to the moment of their death, will obtain eternal life and realize eternal happiness. I am far, far from believing that a

God of perfect equity and wisdom would, through his sacred Word, utter to mankind so many explicit and emphatic warnings concerning future punishment, and yet never intend to punish the guilty. I am unable to reconcile the views of Universalists with the words of the Most High. However, I do not despair because of failing in this particular, for I am fully satisfied that God is right and cannot err, and that some men are wrong, and all men liable to err. Then, since our happiness in the other world depends on our faithful attention to duty in this, it is of the greatest importance that we give all diligence in making sure our salvation. Death may come upon us without a moment's notice, as it came upon the pleasure-seekers at the Brooklyn Theater; and as death leaves us, so the judgment will find us. If we take flight into eternity with our sins unforgiven, we shall certainly be found at the bar of God in the same lamentable condition. If we wander through death's valley without having the glorious hope of spending eternity in heaven, we shall assuredly stand with the congregated millions, at the last great

day, without this same hope. O, how full of solemnity is this truth! How it should win the attention of the careless, and awake the sleeper to immediate action, and cause the skeptic to relinquish forever his erroneous, dangerous, and unscriptural ideas!

There is an hour coming to us all when only the christian's hope and the presence of the Saviour will give peace and joy. Everything else will fail to comfort. The false doctrines with which men have tried to console themselves, will, on that hour, appear before their minds, only to appal by their utter untruthfulness and insufficiency. Arise, therefore, ye dying men and women, embrace the Truth as it is in Jesus, take the enduring Word of God as your guide, and discard the hurtful whims and irrational sentiments of ungodly men. You have no time to give them consideration. Your opportunities are passing away. Your days are diminishing in number. Soon your probation will have expired; and for the sake of your immortal souls, I implore you, in the Redeemer's Name, to prepare now to meet your God! The church warns you. Every-



day occurrences warn you. O, amid all the disasters which send a sensation of horror through us, strive to avert that wildest and most awful disaster—the disaster of a ruined soul!

Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. The unfaithful will not hear the Saviour say to them, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” And if heaven be the resting-place of departed saints; and, further, if only the good are permitted to enter there, is it not important that we be in readiness to reign therein, and to participate in the pleasures which are at God’s right hand? Why live from month to month, and from year to year in a state of non-preparation? Why live in painful anxiety regarding your future? Salvation and peace are offered you. The title to heavenly possessions is held before you for your acceptance. I am perfectly safe in saying that there is not one in this house who does not desire to win heaven. All of you wish and hope to realize its joys hereafter. Many of you have relatives there; and you



hope to see, and dwell with them. The thought of not realizing these expectations would make you shudder. And yet how strange it is that people will deliberately run the risk of losing heaven, by procrastination! William III., in order to quell a rebellion in the north of Scotland, issued a proclamation to all the rebel chiefs to appear at a given place on or before the 31st of December, 1691, and take the oath of allegiance to the king. Those who did not appear were to be treated as outlaws, and were liable to be put to death as traitors to the crown. One by one yielded, and all had affixed their names to the paper, except one. MacIan was the leader of the smallest yet haughtiest tribe. He did not intend to finally resist, but he hoped to be the last of the Scottish chiefs to submit. A day or two before the 31st, he started for the place where the oath was to be taken; but a severe snow-storm impeded his progress, and he did not arrive until nearly a week after the king's messenger had returned to London. A band of soldiers immediately entered the valley of Glencoe, and MacIan and his followers became

victims to his proud obstinacy. How many persons hazard their immortal souls, as MacIan hazarded his life, by refusing to obey the commands of the King Eternal! Yea, how many have lost heaven by simply delaying till it was forever too late!

My hearers, it is incomparably better to put forth an immediate effort to rescue the soul. Satan whispers in the ear of the unsaved one, and says, "Time enough yet," but Jesus says, "Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation." When a pleasure-loving daughter was preparing for a ball, her christian mother implored her to give her heart to the Saviour. The daughter replied, "Time enough yet for me to attend to religion." Two weeks after, she was suddenly stricken down, and died in a few hours. Her last words were, "Oh that all young people were present, that I might warn them not to do as I have done! I am going to receive my everlasting fate! I am going to dwell with devils!" May not one of this gathering be so mad, so careless, as to continue refusing salvation till it is too late!—this is my earnest prayer. O, I fancy

I never understood so clearly, as I do now, the force of these two words, Time and Eternity! How much they imply! God help all of us to use time by preparing for the better world, so that an eternity of joy shall be ours—an eternity, bright with the Saviour's presence and smiles;—an eternity, happy because of pure and genial associations;—an eternity, joyous because of never-ceasing music and songs of sacred adoration! Amen and amen.



## A SLEEPLESS NIGHT.

“Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of music brought before him; and his sleep went from him.”—*Dan.* vi., 18.

DARIUS, the Median, succeeded Belshazzar in the government of the kingdom of Babylon. He was sixty-two years old when he ascended the throne; and, although only one year of his reign is mentioned, there are, connected with that administration, some very important events. Darius set a hundred and twenty princes over the kingdom; and over these princes he set three presidents, of whom Daniel was first, or chief. The king placed the utmost confidence in Daniel, and intended to elevate him to the honorable position of grand vizier, or prime minister. This partiality of Darius towards Daniel created a feeling of envy among the presidents and princes; and they formed a scheme to destroy Daniel. They

first tried to pick a flaw in his administration, but failed. Then they said: "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." So they assembled in the royal court, to present a statute and get it established. The statute was, that whoever would ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, except of the king, would be cast into the den of lions. Darius gave his sanction to this, and attached his signature to the writing and the decree. Now, Daniel was a faithful servant of God; and it was his custom to go to his chamber three times a day, and kneel down, with his face toward Jerusalem, and pray and render thanks to the Most High. But did he abandon this custom when that statute came into force? No; for when he knew that the writing was signed, he entered his house, and, while the windows of his room were open, prayed and gave thanks to God, three times each day, as he had done before, and as though there was no law against divine worship. His enemies discovered him in the act of worshipping his God, and went imme-



diately to the king and divulged it to him, reminding him also that the law was unalterable. Darius was greatly displeased with himself because he had been induced to pass such a law; and he endeavored in every possible way to repeal it, and labored till sunset to protect his accused friend, but all in vain. He was compelled to do as the law required. At his command Daniel is arrested. An apparent victory is gained by his enemies. How they chuckle over their scheme! Now Daniel comes, followed by the rabble. What loud tramping there is! What shouting! What confusion! people running from all quarters to see the christian statesman thrown among the wild beasts. After he is cast in the den, a stone is laid over the mouth of the den, and the king seals it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords. The crowds have now moved away, and instead of the shoutings and tramping of the multitude, there can only be heard the thunder-like and terrific roar of the lions. Darius, whose heart is full of sorrow and remorse, hopes that God will deliver Daniel. How he regrets on account of having estab-



lished a law which might be the ruin of the chief president. "Then the king went to his palace and passed the night fasting; neither were instruments of music brought before him; and his sleep went from him." On previous nights he was feasting, and enjoying sweet odours, and listening to soul-stirring and delightful music; but on the night when Daniel was in the den, there was no rest for him. Nothing could give him solace. No music, however sweet, could please him. No edibles, however delicate, could induce him to eat. He was uneasy and wretched. He passed a sleepless night, as the result of his indiscretion. How very many people pass sleepless nights! How many retire, but not to rest! They hear the clock strike every hour, and their eyes become wearied by looking upon night's sombrous shadows.

In the first place, I remark, that *a knowledge of being spiritually insecure brings sleepless nights to many persons*. All of us desire to be safe, not only in this world, but in the next. Why do men get insurance on their property? Because they wish to be safe from heavy

losses. Why does the workingman labor so assiduously to lay a little money past? Because he wishes to be safe in times of depression, or when feebleness from sickness or old age, might render him incapable for work. Why have there been made so many scientific discoveries for the protection of human life? Because people are looking for, and are in pursuit of safety. A consciousness of danger gives painful anxiety. And those who are in spiritual jeopardy, and realize their situation, have but little happiness and contentment. The fear of death is their torture. Every hour they are haunted by this fear. Nor does it leave them after their occupations have ended for the day. Indeed it comes with night's gloom to harrass with still greater anguish, and balmy sleep refuses to draw near them to fold them in its robe of dreamy quietude, and the chamber echoes with cries of distress, and the pillow becomes moistened with tears. They take a wild look into the future, and the glance sends a sensation of horror through them. No hope of eternal life cheers them. A knowledge of sins forgiven

is not possessed by them. They are tossed about by the wild breakers of sin—without anchor, or helm, or compass. The darkness deepens around them; the winds of a troubled conscience blow with increasing fury, and, in their distress, they exclaim, “Oh, that the morning would dawn! I am not prepared to die.” Troubled soul, you will find rest in Jesus. Take him as your Saviour, and your sleep will be sweet, and you can say with the Psalmist, “I will both lay me down in peace, “and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me “dwell in safety.” The presence of the Master makes us courageous, disperses all gloom, settles all troubles, quells the heart-throbbings, and brings tranquillity and true enjoyment. It is a great mistake for people to worry and fret continually over their sins, never going to him whose “blood cleanseth from all sin.” Do not be always looking at self. That will not help you. Look to Jesus! He alone can save. At one time I was out in a small sail-boat when a heavy sea was rolling. The wind struck our sails by sudden gusts, almost capsizing the boat. It was a time of imminent

danger. The mighty swells surged along with angry roar, carrying us at their will. Finally a strong gust struck us, which would have proved disastrous, had not one of the sailors let go the fore-sheet at our bidding. That having been let loose, saved us. So when we let go of self, and cling to Christ, we are perfectly secure. He saves us. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower."

Again: *a knowledge of having repeatedly rejected offered mercy, brings sleepless nights to many persons.* Ah! it was their rejection of salvation which has made hundreds so miserable in their last moments. It was their knowledge of misimproved opportunities which so much intensified their grief, and made the valley so frightfully obscure as they entered it. How many persons make use of every chance to hear a sermon, but yet do nothing further than to listen. Every Sabbath they are found in their places in the house of God; every Sabbath they hear the Saviour's earnest invitations to sinners. Every Sabbath they are told of a loving Jesus, of free salvation, of sustaining grace, of heavenly pleasures, of the brevity

of life, of the immortality of the soul, of the solemn hour of death, of the Judgment Day, of eternal life, and everlasting punishment—they are told all these, and still refuse to accept the pearl of great price. They listen to the closing remarks of the minister; they engage, perchance, in singing the closing hymn, and reverently bow while the benediction is being pronounced; and they leave the place of worship and return to their homes, without putting forth any effort to escape. They retire to their sleeping-apartment, where they soliloquize of their extreme folly. They contemplate the peace of mind which would follow their acceptance of free grace. Yet they openly reject what they know to be indispensable to their present and future happiness. Alas! how dilatory we are in regard to spiritual affairs! It takes some men a life-time to decide whether they will become christians; and very often they are stricken down suddenly before arriving at such a decision. My hearers, the importance of being reconciled to God is so apparent that there should not be the slightest hesitation on the part of the sin-



ner. Human life is too sacred, too brief, and too full of responsibility, to be frittered away by conjecturing, and vacillating and skepticising. As Lady Huntingdon was on her way one evening to a brilliant assembly, these words, which she had committed to memory years before, in learning the catechism, suddenly returned to her mind,—“Man’s chief “end is to glorify God and to enjoy him for-“ever.” Her contemplation of these words moulded her future life. She gave herself entirely to the Saviour, and her whole life became one “living sacrifice.” O that this same truth would flash powerfully upon the souls of all the unsaved before me, changing the disposition, renovating the corrupt heart, creating holy aspirations, and making the whole life beautiful.

Further: *a knowledge of having lived a worthless life, brings sleepless nights to many persons.* A futile life may be compared to the dashing of waters against a rock-bound coast. For centuries the salt sea has broken upon the stern, invincible adamant; but no visible impression is left. On the other hand, a useful



life may be compared to the sea as it rolls in upon the pebbly strand. The waves flowing in and then receding, add more beauty and deeper colors to the pebbles and shells that adorn the beach, and make it a pleasant resort for the care-worn. The stones are rendered smooth and attractive, while the sand is collected in beautiful shapes by the agitation of the water. Noble and God-like is that life which brightens and refreshes everything it touches! But alas! for that one whose life is only a blank. Eternal ages could not wipe out the stain left by such a life! A young man was converted during an illness which proved fatal. Upon hearing that he could not recover, he said, "Oh, my lost life-time! I'm twenty-four, and, until a few weeks since, nothing has been done for Christ, and everything for myself and my pleasures. My companions will think I've made a profession in view of death. Oh, that I could live to meet this remark, and do something to show my sincerity, and to redeem my lost, lost, *lost* life!" Look around you and you will see multitudes who are living useless lives. You see

the drunkard's life, no good deeds adorning it. Instead of being a benefit to his family, he is an injury. Instead of being a credit to the community in which he lives, he is a disgrace. You see mothers, also, who fail to perform their duty to the children God has intrusted to their keeping. Oh, what a grand work a woman can effect in her own family circle! It is not necessary that mothers should step beyond the boundary of domestic life, in order to find employment. The home is sufficient to bring into play all the talents, and call into requisition all the knowledge of which the mother is in possession. And yet some women are always teasing and worrying about the question of "Woman's Rights," as if they were kept down and refused their rights. Let women be careful to look into their homes and see that everything is all right there, before they wrangle about affairs outside the pale of feminine modesty. If all mothers would be content to use those rights they have, there would be more happy homes, and more well-trained children, than there are. A mother's life and influence may be a blessing or a curse

to her children. Henry Ward Beecher says, "The mother's heart is the child's school-room." Yes, and whatever is taught therein will mould that child's future life. Mothers, be faithful and prudent teachers. Then, again, there are men whose only desire is to accumulate wealth. They care not how the world wags, if they are only successful enough to accomplish their purpose. They never assist any good cause, never labor for the elevation of the degraded millions, never point one sinner to the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," never offer a prayer, nor attend our Sabbath meetings, nor manifest any concern for their own salvation. But the time will come when they will agonize on account of having lived in vain. Remorse, bitter in the extreme, will seize them, as the reproachful memories of the past cluster before their minds, and, like Darius, they will find no rest, and their nights will be sleepless, and their cup of grief full to overflowing.

In conclusion, I wish to say, that our manner of life here will be recorded by a Divine hand, and the record will be produced on that

great day when all secrets shall be divulged, and all dark deeds brought to light. If the record be good, all will be well; if it be bad, punishment will ensue. Strive, then, to the utmost of your ability, and in the strength of an omnipotent God, to live a life, the record of which will bring from the lips of the Supreme Judge, this glowing eulogy, "Well done!" May the actions of your life be such as will place many stars in your crown of rejoicing; and may your last moments be made happy from a knowledge that your career has not been one of selfishness and shame.



## JESUS, THE RESCUER.

“Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”—*Luke* II., 12.

“And thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.”—*Matt.* I., 21.

OUR Saviour's Nativity is a theme which has delighted the noblest and purest of minds. The student of the heavenly bodies may boast of the captivating theme of astronomy; the philosopher may tell us of his happy topics; the lyric poet may sing to us of Nature's embellishments; but none of these themes can compare with the glorious theme we are about to contemplate. It is transcendently more beautiful and comprehensive than Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," or Baxter's "Saints' Everlasting Rest."

In the first place, let us notice a few of *the circumstances connected with the birth of Christ.*



Cæsar Augustus has issued a decree for a "census of the Roman Empire and its subject kingdoms;" and the people are flocking, each to his own city, to be taxed. Joseph and Mary are in the crowd. They are leaving their home at Nazareth and going to Bethlehem, the royal city of David, to whose house they belong. Now they have reached the city; but are unable to find a lodging-place. The inn, for the accommodation of travellers, is filled with important and wealthy people; so that, for such as Joseph and Mary, who are poor and, to all appearance, less important, there is no room. But there's a stable close by, into which they go for shelter! What! they belong to the royal city of David, and yet their circumstances are such as will not allow them to go to the inn? Yes, verily so. After a journey of sixty miles, they are necessitated to repair to a building or cave which is partially used as a protection for cattle. They are too poor to "put up" at the inn.

Now the shades of night are clustering around Bethlehem city, causing it to wear a sombre, but significant appearance. Seated

on an eminence, how majestically it rises toward the star-decked skies! The light of the pale moon comes streaming down upon that royal city, and upon its district which is adorned with olives, vines, and fig-trees. The noise, caused by the arrival of so many people from various parts, is not now heard; a solemn, yet pleasing silence reigns; and brighter and still brighter shine the firmamental lamps above the Judean plains, till the whole scene becomes one of enchantment and rare beauty. Time passes on; and strange sights and sounds come forth. The shepherds that are on the night-watches over their flocks, are startled by the sudden approach of an angel; and the glory of the Lord shines round about them; and the angel speaks, saying: "Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." Now rings out, from a host of angelic voices, a mighty and heavenly chorus, the "mysteri-

ous first music of the christian world!" And away in the distance are uttered the ever-memorable words, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!"

After the departure of the angels, the shepherds agree to go into Bethlehem to see the babe who is to be the Saviour of the world. They discover him in the manger with his mother, Mary, and with Joseph, just as the angel had said. And this is the same Mary who was too poor to go to the inn, and was compelled to take shelter in a building or cave in which cattle were kept. And it was in a manger that the child Jesus was born and nursed—in a manger where was born that One whose "name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." No palatial adornments surrounded Him! His sleeping apartment contained no costly curtains, nor showy tinsel, nor dazzling chandelier, nor handsome bouquets, nor extravagant perfumes! No retinue of domestics was in readiness to wait upon Mary and her child! There was nothing of

the kind. The world's Redeemer had but a stable for His birth-place, and a manger for His couch. Everything connected with His birth was obviously suggestive of meekness and humility.

“Stand amazed, ye heavens, at this!  
See the Lord of earth and skies;—  
Humbled in the dust He is,  
And in a manger lies!”

At Jerusalem, the palace of Herod, the king, was much disturbed by the circumstance of the Messiah's birth. Wise men came from the east to Jerusalem, inquiring for the new-born King, at the same time announcing that they had seen His star, and had come to worship Him. Herod, upon hearing the news, was troubled, and so was all Jerusalem. It seems singular that this city did not hear of the Saviour's birth, until the intelligence was conveyed by strangers who had travelled a distance of perhaps a thousand miles; and yet the birth took place not six miles from Jerusalem. But Herod's alarm deepens; and he summonses a large convocation, so that he may obtain some knowledge of this important matter—important, I say, because it affected

his throne. He wishes the excitement to die; and, therefore, privately calls the wise men, of whom he inquires what time the star appeared. Then he sends them to Bethlehem, saying,—“Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship Him.” They now leave the presence of the king, and the star goes before them, as their guide, and stands where the young child is. They enter the house, and fall down and worship the Messiah; and, opening their treasures which they have brought with them, they present the Saviour with gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh, according to the custom followed when in the presence of those of high rank.

Shortly after this, while the wise men are asleep, a dream passes over them,—a dream sent by God. It warns them not to return to Herod; and, taking another way, they depart into their own country. Joseph also has a dream, in which the angel of the Lord appeareth unto him, and says,—“Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into



Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." He obeys the command! And in the night-time, when stillness reigns around, they leave the shrouded city of Bethlehem, to go into Egypt. After a few days journey, by the ordinary caravan road, they will arrive at their destination. There will be some expense connected with such a journey; but the gifts left them by the Magi will enable them to defray the expense.

Herod is enraged because he has been slighted by the wise men; and in his fury what does he do?—Why, he deliberately murders all the children, from two years old and under, in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof. But the child Jesus is out of his reach!

Is not, then, the history of the Saviour's birth characterized by mysterious and tragic occurrences? The "Flight into Egypt" has occupied the attention of skillful painters, and afforded to the literary genius a theme upon which he delighted to dwell! The "Birth in the Manger," and the "Angels appearing to the Shepherds on the Plains," have also secured

undivided attention and won the highest admiration! Well might the poet write, in the most elegant and sublime language, upon a theme so gloriously interesting as the theme of Our Saviour's Nativity! Well might the composer of music excel in his composition for those words which proclaim the rapturous news of the Advent! Well might the heavenly host break forth into seraphic strains, after the angel had announced to the shepherds on the Judean hills, the birth of King Emmanuel!

In the second place, I call your attention to *the mission of Christ*. It was a mission of love! love whose depth is unfathomable! whose freedom is astonishing! whose sweetness is unsurpassable! When a world was agonizing under the intolerable burden of sin; when it beheld inevitable death rushing towards it, with horrid grin and ghastly appearance; when, upon taking a glance into the future, it saw a dismal, frightful, and an eternal gloom awaiting it; when, through the grated window of its own cell, it observed stern justice approaching, with unfaltering step, to punish,—then there was a happy interposition! Love Divine sprang

in between the guilty and the offended—between sinful humanity and God, the Infinite One. Christ, the only begotten Son of God, was the interposer! He said,—“I’ll give my life to shield that world from everlasting woe, and torment, and disgrace!” And He leaves His Father’s throne in yonder heaven, denies himself all honor and dignity, and enters upon His mission of love!

“O, for this love let rocks and hills  
Their lasting silence break,  
And all harmonious human tongues  
The Saviour’s praises speak!”

A certain man had a wayward son. His conduct brought down his father to a premature grave. On the day of his funeral the son was present. He saw, unmoved, the pale face of his father in the coffin. He stood, unmoved, on the brink of the grave, when that cold form was lowered to the bottom. The family retraced their steps. Their father’s will and testament was read: in that testament was the name of the undutiful son. As his name was read, his heart heaved with emotion, his eyes were bedewed with tears, and he was heard to say,—

"I did not think that my father would have so kindly thought of me in his will." And so we are surprised that our names have been mentioned by the everlasting Father, that notwithstanding our manifold sins, Christ has willed us eternal life.

The mission of Christ was also one of deep sufferance. His temptation in the wilderness; his expulsion from Jerusalem and Judea; the cruel treatment he received in the city of Nazareth, when the citizens dragged him out intending to hurl him over a steep precipice; his rejection at Samaria; the attempt made to stone him, while he was walking in the portico of Solomon's Temple; his sorrow because of the treachery of Judas; his agony in the garden of Gethsemane; his arraignment before the Sanhedrim, as a false prophet and blasphemer; the insults he received when he was brought before Pilate and Herod; and then, his crucifixion;—these convey to us only a faint idea of the sufferings endured by the Messiah, during his sojourn among men! Yes, while it was a mission of love, it was also one of deep sufferance—sufferance which tongue fails to describe,

and mind fails to conceive, and the painter's skill fails to represent.

The work of human redemption is amazing in its character! Who can contemplate it, without having aroused in their minds the noblest and holiest aspirations? Who can think of a Saviour's love, and not become seriously impressed? A world—once far from God—brought precious near unto Him by the blood of Jesus! A world—once on the verge of eternal ruin—rescued from the danger by a Divine hand! The deep gloom of hellish night, which had already hung over the human race, vanished before the flashing of the celestial light which escorted the world's Redeemer. The great debt that would have sunken humanity into the pit of the lost, was entirely wiped away by the only begotten Son of God.

Then, let man's Deliverer be loudly praised by a world of human voices! Let there be sung an awakening chorus, in which all the instruments of pleasing sound shall be heard, to make still louder the joyous "Hallelujah to the Lamb," until the entire earth be overwhelmed with a flood of harmony, whose laughing waters shall never subside!



Finally, let us notice *the fulfillment of prophecy in the event of our Saviour's birth*. It was prophesied of the Messiah, "that he should be incarnate before the sceptre departed from Judah; that he should be born of a virgin; that he should be of the seed of David, and of the tribe of Judah; that the place of his nativity should be Bethlehem, a village of Judea; that his name should be Immanuel; that he should appear in the form of a servant, and after a mean and contemptible life, should be betrayed by one of his own household, and cut off for the sins of the people." And there has been a fulfillment of all this that was prophesied of the Saviour, thus affording to the skeptic mind no grounds for doubting the truthfulness and genuineness of the Prophetic Writings. If there had not been a fulfillment of prophecy in the event of the Messiah's birth, the infidel would have occasion to express his disbelief in the existence of a God, and his want of confidence in the Bible; but, happily, he has no occasion. His most extravagant assertions concerning religion; the most artful plans his inventive genius can hit upon, for the over-

throw of truth, and the prevention of the spread of "pure and undefiled" religion, can not wrestle, for a moment, with those sacred truths which are the armor of the christian soldier, and which make him invincible in the spiritual fight! "Truth is mighty, and will prevail!"

In conclusion, let me say, that Jesus, of whom we have been speaking, has placed within the reach of every sinner a "pearl of great price." And what is this pearl? It is salvation from sin and its consequences. And then, we have, implied in this salvation, heavenly fruition, everlasting rest, a crown of glory, a seat among the angels and our dear friends who have crossed the flood! O, how much there is implied in that one word—salvation! And we can have salvation without having to pay for it, although it cost the life and terrible sufferings of the Son of God!

Once there was a poor woman who greatly desired a bunch of grapes from the king's conservatory, for her sick child. She took half a crown, and went to the king's gardener, and tried to purchase the grapes, but was

rudely turned away. Procuring more money, she put forth a second effort; but failed. It happened that the king's daughter heard the angry words of the gardener, and the crying of the woman; and she inquired into the matter. When the poor woman had told her story, the Princess said, "My dear woman, you were mistaken. My father is not a merchant, but a king; his business is not to sell, but to give:" whereupon she plucked the bunch from the vine, and gently dropped it into the woman's apron. Now, salvation is not sold to us; it is given to us, "without money, and without price!"

"Hail! the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

Hail! the Sun of Righteousness!

Light and life to all he brings,

Risen with healing in his wings.

"Mild he lays his glory by,

Born that man no more may die;

Born to raise the sons of earth,

Born to give them second birth!"

## THE GLORIOUS REFUGE.

“The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.”—*Psalm XLVI*, 11.

THIS glorious truth has been echoed and re-echoed on down through the ages till the present time; and now it is re-echoed by the existing generation with increasing enthusiasm and still louder tones. The key-note struck by the Psalmist was but the prelude to the overwhelming chorus which was afterwards taken up by generations and wafted triumphantly to the remotest corners of the earth. The apostles and martyrs caught up the strain; and scarcely had their voices been lost in death, when others took up the strain, and thus it has been sustained all through the centuries. Thus it has been rolling on and on, till the church of to-day heard the glad song; and she too joins in it; so that from her

million choirs, and her million pulpits, and her million assemblies, there swells the shout,—“The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.” There is always a freshness with this anthem. Sainted singers never tire of it. The more frequently it is sung, the brighter shines the truth it conveys. The beauty, and consolation, and richness are not in any wise extracted from it by its frequent repetition. The contemplative mind perceives new charms clustering around these words, each time he studies them, as the naturalist perceives new wonders while pursuing his favorite study.

In the first place, I remark, that *God is the refuge of his people in the time of their temptation*. The most pious and exemplary christians have had to contend against the greatest temptations. And it seems to me those who do the most good have the sorest temptations. The Devil went to Martin Luther and tempted him severely. John Knox, a few hours before his death, awoke from sleep, sighing deeply, on account of being, just then, furiously assailed by the Arch-fiend. But both these



heroes found a refuge in Jehovah, when temptation's tidal wave rolled in upon them. No temptation, however violent, is sufficient to overthrow and destroy the man or woman who places implicit confidence in the Lord of hosts. The grace of God is equal to any exigency. And, blessed be his name, this grace is free, and will not be withheld from those who walk uprightly.

“All needful grace will God bestow,  
And crown that grace with glory too;  
He gives us all things, and withholds  
No real good from upright souls.”

Without this grace or Divine aid the christian could not stand. Without the sword of the Spirit the soldier of Christ would be defeated in battle, and Satan would come out victoriously. “But thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” The arm of Omnipotence is thrown around the tempted one, and where Jesus is there is perfect safety from the storms of temptation. A fleet of a hundred vessels lay at anchor in a port of the Mediterranean, when a fearful storm burst upon them, and drove all

on shore save one vessel. The wonder was how that one could have held its anchorage. But it was discovered that its anchor had grappled into another which lay firmly imbedded in the bottom of the sea. So, my hearers, the soul anchored to Christ will be able to out-ride all the storms of temptation.

Further: *God is the refuge of his people in the time of their danger.* He was the refuge of the Israelitish hosts at the time they were pursued by the army of Pharaoh, the refuge of David when Saul was thirsting for his blood, the refuge of Daniel when in the den of lions, the refuge of Paul when he was in danger of being murdered by the enraged mob at Ephesus, the refuge of Peter when he was beginning to sink beneath the tossing waves of the sea of Galilee, and he continues to be the refuge of his people. The church militant can sing:—"God is our refuge and strength, a  
"very present help in trouble. Therefore will  
"not we fear, though the earth be removed, and  
"though the mountains be carried into the  
"midst of the sea; though the waters thereof  
"roar and be troubled; though the mountains

“shake with the swelling thereof.” In my own history there have been times when an Omnipotent arm has saved me from a watery grave, and shielded me from the assassin’s treachery. “The Lord of hosts has been with me; the God of Jacob has been my refuge.”

A soldier of the English army, when on shipboard going to the East, was severely flogged for some slight offence. Maddened by the punishment, he threw himself overboard as soon as he was released. A high sea was running at the time, and all hope of rescuing him vanished. While he was struggling amid the foaming waves, a large albatross made a swoop at him. In the agonies of the death-struggle, he seized it. The bird fluttered, and tried to escape; thus supporting the soldier for a long time, till a boat could be lowered, which reached and rescued him. Now, oftentimes God’s children are in as imminent peril as was that soldier. Frequently it has seemed that their destruction was inevitable; but at the moment of their deepest despair, they have been marvellously delivered. The impending catastrophe has been averted. Yes, God stands by his

people who are in danger, and assures them that he will be with them always, even till the end. Let those who are in peril, hide in the pavilion of the Almighty. He is a strong tower and a rock of defence for such; and though a host of enemies rise up against you, though your bark be driven about on life's wide ocean, and darkness reigns over the waters, and the gale howls with wildest fury, remember that there is One mighty to save.

Again: *God is the refuge of his people in the time of their embarrassment in business affairs.* I know business men who would have been in their graves long ago, if they had not cast their cares on a loving Jesus. Why all this worry over matters, when we can leave them with our Heavenly Father for settlement? Why so many sleepless nights, and confused minds, and aching heads, and frenzied movements, over difficulties out of which God will bring you, if you will but confide in him? Perhaps there is some one ready to say, "It's no use for you to talk like that. No wonder I become frantic. I've a payment to make to a certain firm in a few days, and I

“haven’t the money.” Well, let me say, the more embarrassed your circumstances are, the greater your need of Divine aid. Have you ever gone to the Saviour with your troubles and solicited his counsel and assistance? Have you ever prayed, “O, Lord, help me out of this difficulty?” I propose that you consult God concerning your affairs, and see what will be the results. Until you have made such a move you are not in a position to object to the proposition I have laid down. But you would not feel like offering objections after making this move, but would express your approval of what I had proposed. Bear in mind, however, that God does not always see fit to remove our anxieties at once. Trials are useful. They bring us face to face with the Eternal One, and show to us our dependence on Him. But we will not be tried with a severity so intense that we shall not be able to endure it. “As thy days, so shall thy strength be,” is the promise left on record for our encouragement; and when Christ is with us during our moments of adversity, we need not fear, for he is our stay and salvation. Perplexed one, you



will find refuge from trouble, by going to the world's Redeemer. "Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust."

Again: *God is the refuge of his people in the time of their bereavement.* We glance over the past, and think of the time when the angel of death made a swoop at home's bright circle, and carried away a dear one to the other shore. To us that was an hour of grief and loneliness when we sat by the bed on which lay the lifeless form of a near relative. We looked at the eyes, glazen and meaningless, and we wept to think that the animation had deserted them. We beheld the pale, sunken cheek, which, but a short time before, was mantled with the gay flush of gladness, and the sight was more than we could withstand. How lonely home was then! Music and song hushed. Merry voices decreased to faint whisperings. Gloom in every apartment.

And it is in the time of bereavement that the Saviour is especially near to his children. He enters the room of mourning, draws aside the curtains to let light into the souls of the bereft, pours consolation into the mourners'

hearts, and points out to them that land where tears are never shed, and death leaves no chill, and disease leaves no pain. It is said that in a distant sea there is an island, from whose shores the fishermen sail in small crafts to procure the treasures of the deep. During their absence from this island, thick mists often gather over highland, cliff, and beacon, and the mariners are left without a mark by which to steer their laden barks. But in these dull hours they are not left to wander on the pathless sea; for when the time for their return arrives, the women of the islet—mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters—all descend to the shores, and raise the voice of song. The sound of their voices is borne over the water by the gentle zephyrs, till it falls sweetly on the ears of the sailors. The familiar voices serve as their guide; and they steer their boats in safety to the shore. So does the bereaved christian hear the consoling voice of Jesus, when the thick mists of tribulation linger on life's sea. That voice falls soothingly on the ear of the mother who has lost the child of her affection. It falls tenderly on the ears of

sons and daughters who have sat by the death-bed of loving parents, and watched their last struggles; and the bereaved ones are enabled to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." When relatives leave us, Jesus comes to stay with us during our lonely moments. He is a friend above all others. How attentive he is to the cries of the distressed. How willing he is to administer solace, and bear our sorrows, and restore to us tranquility of mind.

In the last place, I remark: *God is the refuge of his people while they are passing through the valley of death.* Alas! for those who, in the hour of death, are without refuge. Alas! for those who take a wild leap into eternity, not having any hope of an immortal existence with God and angels. What calamity could be greater! Who could endure the thought of dying without Christ, and facing the frown of the Eternal God! A dying man exclaimed, "Ah! the day in which I ought to have worked is over; and now I see a horrible night approaching, bringing with it the blackness of darkness forever." How sad

were the last utterances of Mirabeau and Francis Newport! God forbid that any of my hearers should wander through death's valley unsupported, unguided, and un comforted! O, there is a better way to die! We may make the transition with rejoicing and hallelujahs, as did Parsons, and Shadford, and the late Phebe Palmer. How triumphantly this noble woman left the shores of earth. Among her dying words were these, "Hallelujah! precious Jesus! I pass through the valley, but without the shadow, trusting in Christ. O, death! where is thy sting? O, grave! where is thy victory?"

My dear friends, Jesus does much for the dying christian. He quells the palpitating heart, alleviates suffering, lifts the veil of gloom, holds the hand of the dying one, and causes the distant shore to appear nearer and brighter. Earth is forgotten. Its charms sink into utter insignificance, while the eager eyes of the departing mortal feast on the brilliancy of the summer land of song, to which he is fast hastening. Heavenly smiles light up his face, as he catches the sweetly-flowing

sounds of angelic voices, and hears the music, indescribably sweet, which flows from the harps of celestial choirs; and in his ecstasy he exclaims, "O, yonder is heaven! Yonder is heaven! And Jesus is taking me there. O, the sights! O, the unspeakable bliss!"

Well may the dying christian feel secure when the Saviour is nigh to comfort and support him. Well may his face be radiant as he stands on the brink of death's cold, turbid stream, for the Friend of fainting pilgrims is with him. Well may he say in the beautiful language of Charles Wesley:

"Other refuge have I none;  
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;  
Leave, O leave me not alone,  
Still support and comfort me.  
All my trust on Thee is stayed;  
All my help from Thee I bring;  
Cover my defenceless head  
With the shadow of Thy wing."



## THE ONLY ENTRANCE.

"I am the door."—*John* x., 9.

IT has been observed by Sir Isaac Newton that our Lord, being close by the temple, where sheep were confined in folds, spoke parabolically of sheep, of their shepherds, and of the sheep-fold. Hence, the text contains a figure of speech, the use of which furnishes us, at once, and in the most vivid manner, with the idea our Saviour wished to convey. The trope to which I have reference, is one of rare beauty and striking appropriateness. The speaker asserted, and that, too, most distinctly and emphatically, that he was the door, and the only door, by which the sinner must enter, to obtain pardon and a title to that "inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." But, alas! how many are unwilling to enter by this door. And it is

a grievous and terrible mistake when any person tries to get into heaven by any other door but Christ, who says, "*I am the door.*"

In the first place, *it is a mistake to endeavor to gain admission into heaven by the door of earthly accumulations.* The money-safe of the banker, the merchandise of the merchant, the soil of the land-owner, have barricaded immortal souls out of heaven. The possession of millions of money, the owning of a grand residence, and of a costly carriage, and of high-mettled steeds, is not made a condition upon which salvation or heaven is secured. If it were a condition, I'm afraid many would seek, in vain, for admission into the mansions celestial; and there would be a sad, sad future for the indigent classes to behold. O, it is a satisfaction to know that money is not asked of those who go up to the pearly gates. It is a consolation to poor people to know that they will not be required to plank down ten millions of dollars, or fifteen millions of dollars, before they can own seats in heaven. Jesus Christ has purchased heaven for you, for me, and for all mankind; and we have a free pass right in

amongst the glittering hosts. Nor is it a bogus pass either, for it bears the signature of the Redeemer—a signature which was written with blood that streamed from his lacerated side when he was nailed to the cross. O, you who imagine that a large collection of earthly treasures will insure your eternal safety, haste to the door—Christ Jesus, the “Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.” No one who approaches such entrance, believingly, meets with disappointment. Above this door are the words:—“Knock, and it shall be opened unto you;” and there is this passage also:—“For there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus;” and there is yet this other passage:—“I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” The millionaire must be content to go to heaven in the way that the beggar goes. There is no royal road to heaven for the accommodation of affluent and snobbish personages. All who desire peace here and happiness in eternity, must cast themselves at the foot of the cross, and say,

"In my hand no price I bring;  
Simply to the cross I cling."

Place no confidence in riches, or they will be your destruction. When the Washington steamer took fire, one of the passengers, after the first alarm of fire was sounded, ran immediately to his trunk, and took from it a large amount of gold and silver coin; and, loading his pockets with it, he hurried on deck and jumped overboard. Of course, he went down instantly. His treasure was his ruin! Ah! how many, with the weight of riches upon them, have had a similar transition; but the load, they deemed so precious, has dropped, beyond recall, at the terrific clutch of the grim monster Death. That load could not be taken into the next world. It was left behind. A. T. Stewart left it behind. William B. Astor left it behind. Every dying capitalist has left it behind. Why will men be so foolishly careful of that they are unable to retain? Why do they dare to build all their hopes on a crumbling pile of wealth? Does God command us to amass as much property and money as we can, in order that we may be saved?

No, no! It is not the gold of earth that will win for us a crown; it is simple, implicit, continuous faith in the Son of God as an all-sufficient Saviour. He saves, and that to the uttermost, all who come unto him by Faith. "I am the door."

Further: *it is a mistake to try to enter heaven by the door of moral virtue.* Now, moral excellence does not imply conversion or the pardon of sin. It is very often one of the happy consequences of conversion. But many persons entertain the erroneous idea that a man of good, unimpeachable moral character, is in a condition of salvation, and therefore an heir to heaven. There lived in a Connecticut village a man of great natural innocence of character, whose life was so beautiful, that his mother thought he must know what religion was. In his family, and among his neighbors, he was all that could be desired. During the progress of a revival, he became deeply impressed of his great want. Although a naturally quiet man, he came to church one evening deeply agitated. The burden of sin was heavy upon him. He went to the altar-



rail with his wife, who was a christian, and there, in tears and agony, he wrestled for deliverance. He felt that nothing could help him so much as his wife's prayers, and constantly urged her to pray. She said she had never prayed in public, and could not. He said she must. She did; and their broken petitions were soon answered by pardon and peace. Moralists are sometimes powerfully convicted and clearly converted. And had that man rested satisfied with the possession of only moral perfection, and never given heed to the spiritual, his soul would finally have been lost, and lost forever. My hearers, this is no new doctrine I am now promulgating. It is a doctrine which was openly declared in the christian church for ages. The declaration of it was heard even in the apostolic age. Our Saviour preached it. The heroic Paul preached it. The Wesleys preached it. The mighty Whitfield preached it; and, thank God, it is preached throughout the world in the present age! And may the time never come when the evangelical church would fling away this grand, wholesome, and fundamental doctrine.

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Morality is not religion. The former means the practice of moral and social duties; while religion "denotes the influences and motives to human duty, which are found in the character and will of God." The one means external virtue, merely; the other means both external and internal virtue. The one implies limitation; the other implies unbounded extension. Hence, you will see the value and importance of conversion, of being born of the Holy Spirit. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." An inward change must be effected; the heart must be cleansed from sin, by the power of Jesus' blood. If you experience this change of heart, your happiness, while on earth, will be inexpressible; and when death overtakes you, and eternity is revealed to your sight, you can gladly use the dying words of Bishop Janes, and say,—*"I am not disappointed."* That will be the moment when your religion will do you good service, in opening a door that you may go into the celestial city. Sir Walter Scott, when dying, took a calm look at Lockhart, and said, *"I may have but a minute to speak to*

you. My dear, be a good man; be virtuous; be religious. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here;" and after asking God to bless his friends, he passed away. O, yes,

"'Tis *religion* that can give  
Sweetest pleasure while we live;—  
'Tis *religion* can supply  
Solid comfort when we die."

Again: I remark that *it is a mistake to attempt to get into heaven by the door of popularity and scholarship*. The river of fame appears bright at a distance; but a great many who have come to bathe in its waters have felt a chill and a pang. There are men who strive for nothing beyond an illustrious name. Anything they would give to reach the goal of their ambitious desire. They hesitate not to sacrifice the best principles, to reach it. Madly they cry out, "Give me but popularity, and I throw all else aside!" They long to be decked with the garland of worldly honors, and to receive the adoration of nations, and the most high-sounding eulogies that could be bestowed on mortal. O,

fame, thou art the charming, delusive goddess of earth! At thy shrine, multitudes bow and worship. Thy brilliant hues arrest and hold the attention, till at last thy lover finds thee false, insufficient, and aggravating! The most eminent statesmen found it so. Then, what a sad mistake it is to try to obtain happiness here and peace in eternity by means of mere popularity! What did popularity accomplish for Pitt, or Sheridan, or for Byron, who despairingly wrote:

“My days are in the yellow leaf,  
The flowers and fruit of life are gone,  
The worm, the canker, and the grief,  
Are mine alone.”

O, what sad utterances these are, to come from the famous poet! Within his troubled soul there dwelt a flame of unspeakable woe. No heavenly light cheered him while he passed through death's gloomy vale. No Jesus was with him to give him solace in his lonely moments. No Almighty hand was there to lift the veil—so dark, which covered his eyes. All was gloom,—deep, sorrowful, impenetrable gloom.

It is impossible, also, to enter heaven by the door of scholarship. The value of a good education will not be questioned by any rational mind. We live in an age of enlightenment. Look at our excellent educational institutions. Look at our public schools. What facilities they afford for giving instruction to the growing population; and how glorious are the results of this mental discipline. All modern improvements can be attributed to the extraordinary power of brain culture. I don't, therefore, discard scholarship, when I affirm that it will not take a man to heaven; and I say this as a warning to those of my hearers (if there are any), who place dependence on mental attainments, for salvation and heaven. These blessings are to be had only through Jesus Christ. He is the door, by which all who wish to be saved, must pass in. O, it is a grand entrance, too. Why object to go in by it? Have not millions upon millions passed in by that very entrance? By such entrance the apostolic company, and the heroic martyrs, and the mighty hosts of Christian ministers who lived in the early



times,—all these passed into eternal joy, by the great door, Christ Jesus! And now hundreds are passing in by that door. Christians want no other door, for everything they need is within the sheepfold of God, and they would be unable to get in, except through the door, which is Christ. “I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.” Shelter and comfort are found inside God’s sheepfold; and poor, perishing humanity needs such blessings. The storms and trials of life rush cruelly upon us, as the simoon of Arabia overtakes the traveller; and oftentimes we are in deepest despair. But when we get into the cleft of the “Rock of Ages,” nothing can harm us. A party of travellers in the desert, who were overtaken by the fierce simoon, came suddenly upon a rude building of stone, well protected with roof and doors, which the hand of charity had erected there in the desert for a shelter. With joy they rushed into it, closed the doors, and were safe. So when the simoon of adversity overtakes us, we find refuge in Christ. Are you willing to go to Him for salvation?

Remember, if you are ever saved your salvation will have been obtained through Christ alone, not through wealth, or moral virtue, or fame, or scholarship. Though you were in possession of the vast universe; though your knowledge were such that you could scan with more than an eagle's eye, the mighty productions in the bosom of space; though your fame were so extensive, that your name was familiar to the millions of earth, and lauded by the world's musicians, till every zephyr wafted harmony, and every gale carried with it deep, thundering tones,—yet, notwithstanding all that, it would be utterly impossible for you to be saved, except through the Lord Jesus Christ. O, fling the jewels of earth aside; toss away the garment of self-sufficiency; let not the pursuit of popularity be your eternal damnation; do not rely on mental acquirements for future happiness and safety; but come, just as you are, with all your uncleanness and imperfections, and cast yourself at the footstool of sovereign mercy, saying, in the language of the poor publican, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner.”

The time will come when the terrestrial will fail to attract. In that time great alarm will be manifested regarding the future. Then, the glittering coronet will drop from the brow, festive songs and mirthfulness will cease, the musician's fingers will stiffen on the harp-strings, costly robes will be found amongst ashes, dazzling gems will be crushed under foot, the eye will stare in wildest horror, the earth will rock to and fro, and a mighty flame will swoop down upon the reeling pile, causing universal destruction. The sleeping millions will wake up to view the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds. Then the Supreme Judge will come in the clouds of heaven, to judge all nations; and the books shall be opened. At the tribunal bar will be gathered an august number, and the wicked "shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."

O, when that dreadful hour comes, how glorious it would be to have a refuge in Jesus. "I am the door."

## SAMUEL IS CALLED.

“For thou didst call me.”—I *Samuel*, III., 8.

THIS is the utterance of an only child, named Samuel, who, when in his sleeping-apartment was aroused from slumber by a voice which he supposed to be the voice of Eli, the high priest. Eli, at the same time was sleeping in his own apartment, and hence could not have called the child. After the first call, Samuel hastened away to Eli's chamber, and, in a clear, sweet voice, says, “Here am I; for thou calledst me.” Eli replies, “I called not; lie down again.” I fancy I can see astonishment written on the youthful face of Samuel, as he leaves the presence of Eli and returns to the couch he vacated a moment before. After the second call, Samuel arises and appears to Eli again, but he meets with the same disappointment he met the first time.

He retires more astonished than ever. After the third call, he goes to Eli, who by this time perceives that the Lord has called the child; and in order to test it, he gives this command to Samuel: "Go, lie down; and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, 'Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth.' " He leaves at Eli's bidding, and lies down again on his couch. The Lord then came and stood before him, and called, saying, "Samuel, Samuel." "Speak, for thy servant heareth," responded Samuel. Then the Lord said to him, "Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house; when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice, nor offering, forever." What a call, and what a revelation that was to Samuel in Shiloh!



I remark, first, that *God calls the unconverted*. And how very numerous are the ways in which he calls! He calls by means of his sacred Word; calls by his Holy Spirit; calls by laying the hand of disease or bereavement upon us; calls by depriving us of our possessions, that we may see the vanity and transitoriness of earthly things. To the worshippers of accumulated wealth he says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves no not break through nor steal." To that weeping mother, from whose bosom death has cruelly taken a loved one, he says, "Prepare to meet thy God." To those who are weighed down with a load of sin, he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavily laden, and I will give you rest." To the many hundreds who are recklessly rushing to eternal we, he says, "Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?" All of you who have come to years of accountability, can remember the invitations

God has given you to forsake sin's dismal and dangerous road, and to select the way leading to endless happiness and safety. Jesus has whispered these invitations in your ear; and you felt that they were full of sweetness, and affection, and earnestness. He is indeed the sinner's friend; for "he came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." He is not willing that any should perish, but rather that all should turn to him and live. Yes, my hearers, he yearns intensely for your salvation—longs for your restoration to his favor— anxiously desires to see you firmly established on the Rock of Ages, with your eyes Zionward. The deep, formidable shades of eternal death hover around the sinner as he journeys along. He nears the verge of woe unspeakable, approaches a destination awful in the extreme; but the voice of a gracious God rings in his ear, apprising him of danger, and saying, in tones almost audible, "Stop, poor sinner! stop! not many more steps, and there will be the final plunge,—the wild leap into a chasm of deepest gloom." A few days ago, I was standing on Prospect Point, from which

I had a commanding view of the Falls of Niagara. And the mighty plunge of those waters over a precipice one hundred and sixty feet in height, made me think of that final leap so madly taken by unfortunate ones who have heard the calls of God, but have refused to heed them. The young man who spends his nights in debauchery, hears the Holy Spirit calling upon him to abandon his wicked and deleterious practices. The young woman who thinks of little else but dress, and does little else but adorn herself before flashing mirror, she too, hears this voice; and it says to her, "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity!" Who, I ask, have not gotten a call from God? This call may be given in a mysterious way. Paul was called in a mysterious way when he was journeying to Damascus on an embassy of persecution. John Bunyan was called by a terrific dream which he had concerning the Judgment Day. West and Lyttleton were called by their endeavors to prove that the Bible was an imposture.

"God moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform."

Again, *God calls repeatedly*. Our efforts to benefit humanity are often relaxed. When we are unable to discover immediate results from our labors, we become disheartened, and are very often inactive, when all our energies should be in lively operation. By many christians there are not a continuous fervor and an unwavering purpose exhibited. There may be an occasional earnestness shown; but, alas! how it hides itself behind the dark cloud of relaxation! and the effect of this inconstancy in the sphere of christian vocation, is keenly felt by both pastor and congregation. Such inconstancy, however, is not displayed by the Lord Jehovah. In him "there is no variable-ness, neither shadow of turning." He does not call the sinner but once, and then entirely desert him. No; his calls are frequent, although the responses are few. On his part there is no abandonment of desire, but a continuous longing for the restoration of the wayward prodigal.

And *he calls affectionately*, also. His love for us is beyond our comprehension. Its depth is unfathomable. Its width is infinite. Its

nature is inconceivably transcendent. Need I bring you to Calvary to convince you that the Saviour's call could not be otherwise than a call of warmest affection? Need I point out to you the lacerated, bleeding body of the Son of God, in order to satisfy you as to how he regards the purchase of his precious blood? Need I repeat to you his last utterances before he expired on the cross, to prove to you that his love towards the offender is unbounded? In the battle of Fort Donelson, an orderly sergeant, seeing a rebel point a rifle at the captain of his company, sprang in front of him, received the ball, and fell dead in the arms of his friend whom he had saved. The soldier died for his *friend*; but Christ died for his *enemies*!

"O unexampled love!  
O all-redeeming grace!  
With swiftness thou didst move  
To save a fallen race."

How many christians, when relating their religious experience, refer to the happy time in their history when Jesus called them. O, they remember that call, as if they had heard it but yesterday. They recollect how affec-



tionately it was given. They could not resist such a call, and they gloriously yielded. To them, the memories connected with their compliance, are richly fraught with sweetness, and satisfaction, and joy. But, my hearers, that same voice which spoke to them, is speaking to you now in all love and tenderness. The Saviour invites you to the gorgeous banquet, to feast on spiritual luxuries. A dazzling host of angels are waiting to strike their harps and raise their anthems of joy, to welcome you; and the world's Redeemer, with outstretched arms, stands in readiness to receive you, and to invest you with a robe of entire forgiveness, so that you shall rejoice in the consciousness that you are a child of God, that Jesus Christ has loved you and given himself for you, that all your sins are blotted out, and you are an heir to everlasting life. Among earthly kings tyrants have been found; but the King of heaven is no tyrant. He is full of compassion and love; and when he warns the sinner to escape eternal death, he does so lovingly, yet earnestly.

I remark, further, that *the call of God is disregarded by multitudes*. Other calls are obeyed. When impure literature calls, there are a thousand voices to say, "Yes, we cheerfully obey thy call." When the intoxicating chalice sends forth its invitation, there are thousands to accept it. When a call is given to enter into a dishonest and dangerous business, a thousand will rush in wild excitement, to commence building up a fortune, at the expense of their own souls and the souls of others. O, it is too true, that there are multitudes more ready and willing to become servants of Satan, than to be the servants of the Most High God—more ready and willing to be representatives of pandemonium, than of the church. Alas, what a damaging example such people set to tender youth! The other day, when passing through Laurel Hill cemetery, so sublimely silent, I looked, with solemn admiration, upon the monuments and tombstones which suggest so much that is sorrowful. But among the towering shafts, I discovered a small, plain tombstone, on which were carved these words: "Here lies the body of our dear

mother, who taught us how to live, and how to die." O, that mother set to her children a truly grand and noble example! Great is her reward in heaven. When on earth she spurned the calls of a wicked world, and faithfully obeyed a call into the enjoyment of peace, and light, and life, and eternal ecstasy. But I have to mourn when I think of the vast numbers of perishing men and women, who treat God's kind invitation, only with indifference, when every moment of their existence is hurrying them to that brink from which they must take flight into eternity. I become depressed, as I stand in the presence of this congregation, and look into the faces of those whose genial nature and nobleness of character have endeared them to me, and find that we cannot strike hands and say: "We're one in Christ." Perchance it is all exhilaration with you now; but let me say to you the time will come in your history, when you will be smitten by disease, or be afflicted by bereavement or adversity; and that will be the time when you will need a firmer basis than the one on which you now stand. That will be the time when

you will most need the smile and the consolation of the Divine Master. I hold up before you, therefore, a Saviour who is the stay of his distressed children. He will never leave them; he will never forsake them.

Lastly, I remark, that *the results of obeying the call of God are glorious in their nature*. Old things pass away, and all things become new. There is a happy transformation of the inner nature, which brings peace, and freedom, and joy in the Holy Ghost. There is a complete removal of those feelings of dread, which the unconverted person has often, yet vainly endeavored to crush out, by mingling with the gay and indulging in sinful sports. The condemnation of sin throws, no longer, its portentous shadows around the obedient one; and he can say rejoicingly:

“No condemnation now I dread—

Jesus, with all in him, is mine;

Alive in him, my living Head,

And clothed in righteousness divine,

Bold I approach th’ eternal throne,

And claim the crown, through Christ my own.”

There is no more wandering over the cragged mountains of sin and folly, no more feeding

upon the husks that the swine did eat, no more lamentations on account of being away from home. The poor Prodigal enters a stately residence; a robe, shining and precious is given him; and he sits down to enjoy the grand banquet furnished by the King of kings. The music of reconciliation falls sweetly upon his ear, while he can almost catch the mellow strains of angelic choristers, as they chant the praises of Him who hath loved us, and washed us in his own blood. Glorious restoration! Blessed change! Happy experience!

But, in imagination, I fly to the mansions above, to see the results of obeying God's call. Those who have come out of great tribulation are there; but they know not sorrow now. They have triumphantly crossed over that boundary separating sorrow from joy, gloom from effulgence, sin from holiness, earth from heaven. They are entirely exempt from all that is painful, or even disagreeable. They are enjoying the society of loved ones; they are inhaling the pure, untainted air of that country so bright and so fair; they are singing a new song with the hundred and forty



and four thousand before the throne; they are rejoicing in the real presence and loving smile of the Redeemer. Their condition is indescribably happy. The glowing descriptions of the Saints' inheritance, written by a Baxter and a Bunyan—these convey to our minds only a faint idea of that Everlasting Rest; for it is far, far beyond the skill of human genius to give anything approaching an accurate description of it. No flight of imagination, no use of language, no artist's skill, can afford a correct knowledge of it. This we shall not be able to obtain until the everlasting gates of the celestial city shall swing open, and we are admitted to behold it all, without the intervention of a dimming veil.

“ Though earth has full many a beautiful spot,  
As a poet or painter may show,  
Yet more lovely and beautiful, holy and bright,  
To the hopes of the heart and the spirits' glad sight—  
Is the land that no mortal may know.

“ O, who but must pine in this dark vale of tears,  
From its clouds and its shadows to go,  
To walk in the light of the glory above,  
And to share in the peace, and the joy, and the love  
Of the land which no mortal may know.

"There the crystalline stream, bursting forth from the  
Flows on, and forever will flow; [throne,  
Its waves, as they roll, are with melody rife,  
And its waters are sparkling with beauty and life,  
In the land which no mortal may know.

"And there, on its margin, with leaves ever green,  
With its fruits healing sickness and woe,  
The fair tree of life, in its glory and pride,  
Is fed by that deep, inexhaustible tide  
Of the land which no mortal may know.

Happy, indeed, are all those who inhabit that delightful country! Will they ever regret having obeyed the call of the Divine Master? Never! but they will rejoice evermore that they responded, and said, as did Samuel, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." O, that this same response were now given by all the unsaved in this house. O, that there may be a general compliance with the earnest invitation of the Saviour. Break loose from the tenacious grasp of a vain, delusive world, and trust yourself in the arms of one who is mighty to save. While passing through the Art Gallery on the Centennial grounds, my attention was attracted to three large paintings which hung together. One was entitled "Youth," and it represented a young man starting out in life. Another of the pictures

was entitled "Manhood," and it represented a man in the prime and vigor of life, bravely battling against the storms of this world, and the other picture was entitled "Old Age," and it beautifully represented a man of white locks, and feeble frame, and tottering step, walking along the brow of a steep mountain. Far behind him could be seen a road exceedingly rough and intercepted by dangerous precipices. This road he had successfully travelled over; and the artist had portrayed him as having almost completed his earthly pilgrimage, and as looking forward, with rapturous expectations, to the heavenly home, where there is everlasting rest. In that picture I saw the angels coming to meet and congratulate him, and to bear him in triumph through the pearly gates of the eternal city. And I earnestly pray that each one of this gathering may, after passing off the stage of earth, be conveyed by angel bands to the haven of felicity; that the music of heaven's harps may delight you in eternity; and that your eyes may rest on the great, white throne, and upon the King in his beauty. Amen.

## UNJUSTIFIABLE PLEAS.

“And they all with one *consent* began to make excuse.”—  
*Luke* XIV., 18.

A CERTAIN man prepared a sumptuous feast for the entertainment of his friends. It was a splendid display. The banqueting house was brilliant with festal lights. Busy servants hurried to and fro in the magnificent hall, viands sent forth a delicious fragrance upon the night air, hilarity gleamed from every countenance, and the entire scene was very imposing. The philanthropic master of the house, seeing that everything was in readiness for the distinguished guests, sent his servants out “to say to them that were bidden, ‘come; for all things are now ready.’ And they all with one *consent* began to make excuse.” One wished to be excused because he had to go and inspect some land he had

purchased. Another wished to be excused because he had bought five yoke of oxen, and had to prove them. Another desired to be freed from the obligation because of his having assumed the responsibilities of a matrimonial relation. What a disappointment it must have been to that generous man who prepared the supper! It was a great affront to him, when those persons who were asked to the banquet would not present an appearance. The excuses they offered for not acting in consonance with the invitation were flimsy, unjustifiable, aggravating excuses.

At the present day similar excuses are offered by those who are invited to the grand spiritual feast. Christ has prepared a banquet, and sent out the invitations, saying, "Come; for all things are now ready." But, alas! how many refuse to attend the feast of redeeming love! Jesus looks compassionately on the poor prodigal, sees his destitution, and offers to him the bread of eternal life; but the sinner will not accept it. The Saviour continues to plead with the unsaved, and affectionately and tenderly says: "Hearken diligently unto



me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness;" yet there is no acquiescence. O, worldly-minded, why do you not act upon the glorious invitation given you? Oh! you allow the world to come between you and God. Your affections are fixed on secular affairs, on unsanctified amusements, on social position, on unreliable treasures, on insufficient fame. You say: "If I should give my heart to the Saviour now, I would have to bid adieu to pleasure; so I desire to be excused." Or you say: "Well, if I were to become a christian now, my business would be neglected; and therefore I wish to be excused." I tell you, such pleas have no force or reason in them. They are unjustifiable. They are unsound in the extreme. They have brought eternal disaster upon multitudes.

By God's help I shall endeavor at this time to expose the defectiveness and absurdity of a few of the pleas offered by the worldly-minded, when asked into the ways of peace, and truth, and pleasantness:

Many persons offer the plea, *that religion conflicts with enjoyment*. I admit that it does

conflict with certain kinds of enjoyment. It clashes with all amusements which injure the body, corrupt the mind, and drain the purse. The religion of Jesus Christ is not something that can be twisted *ad libitum* so as to favor ungodly practices and an impious class. It is far apart from evil in any form. Unsullied and bright, it reveals itself to the world, sending floods of light over the nations of the earth, scattering beams of truth among humanity, melting the mountains of sin, giving joy and peace, and ennobling mankind! And, although it conflicts with unholy pleasures, yet it is in perfect harmony with true enjoyment, with amusements which are healthful, invigorating, and untainted with iniquity. The sincere christian is not afraid to laugh, or take recreation at ball, or croquet, or shooting, or angling. He enjoys the woods, the streams, the ocean, and the flowers, and he can say, with the poet:

“It is God’s pleasure that diffuses charms  
Unspeakable o’er mountain, wood, and stream ;  
To think that He who hears the heavenly choir  
Hearkens complacent to the woodland song ;  
To think that He who rolls yon solar sphere

Uplifts the warbling songster to the sky :  
To mark His presence in the mighty bow  
That spans the clouds, as in the tints minute  
Of tiniest flower ; to hear His awful voice  
In thunders speak, and whisper in the gale ;  
To know and feel His care for all that lives :  
'Tis *this* that makes the barren waste appear  
A fruitful field ; each grove a paradise."

What! Religion versus enjoyment? Absurd idea! It gives birth to the highest enjoyment. To those who embrace it, religion spreads out fields of delight undreamt of before—fields over which the mind wanders with grateful surprise; now contemplating the perfections and attributes of the Deity; now lingering by that sacred, enchanting spot surrounded by the Judean hills, where the world's Redeemer was cradled, and where the notes of glad deliverance first fell upon astonished ears; now meditating on the atonement and its amazing benefits; now feasting on the indescribable glories of heaven, with its pure and genial society, its perennial treasures, its surpassing brilliancy, and its rapturous and overwhelming symphonies,—all, all flood the christian's soul with heavenly ecstasy. Well may

believer "rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is his reward in heaven."

O, you who think religion is a lifeless thing, try it, and your opinion will be changed. You can never have sweet pleasure without it; and, let me tell you, that that enjoyment is worthless, yea, demoralizing, which will not bear the light of religion. Never look for such enjoyment. There is death connected with it. Skeleton fingers clutch the man or the woman who "goes in" for this kind of pleasure. It were better to be in mourning, than to feel the thrill of unsanctified amusements. The votaries of them are robbed of all that is noble and good, and are finally thrown into their graves, leaving behind only sad memories to make the living shudder and weep bitterly. My hearer, taste the pleasures of a christian life. They leave no sting behind. Abandon, at once and forever, the erroneous idea that religion opposes enjoyment. Such an excuse will not bear the pressure of the judgment.

Again: many persons offer the plea, *that their connection with the church would cripple them in their endeavors to make money.* It

would certainly cripple those who are making money in a dishonorable way. But it would be no calamity if such persons were crippled. The love of money is their ruin. Give me poverty, rather than wealth acquired at the expense of my reputation and of immortal souls! "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" The world is an unsatisfying portion. Its treasures vanish, as the pearly dew disappears at the sunbeam's touch. The millionaire can not retain his gold. Death takes the animation out of his fingers, so that he can not hold it. Death closes his eyes, so that he can not see it. Death steals away his senses, so that he can not use it. Ah! it is a great mistake to set the heart upon the things of earth, and to neglect to care for the soul. The best thing a lover of money can do, is to become a christian. It will save him. It will make him conscientious. It will cause him to put his money to a good use; and the relieved classes will bless him; and God will reward him. Even if a man make money honorably, there is danger of his worshipping it, unless he is re-



strained and guided by Divine grace. A cable without an anchor would not avail in a storm. The vessel would be driven before the gale, and be unmanageable, and, with broken keel, and tattered sails, and splintered boom, and destroyed masts, she would be hurled on rock or beach, a pitiable wreck. So the man who is without Christ is like a ship without anchor. He is in danger of becoming a stranded wreck. Cornelius Vanderbilt, who was worth millions, and who died gloriously, regretted deeply his lack of "intimate religious associations through his middle life and the main part of his career." He saw the value and felt the power of religion. And what gave him comfort during his closing moments? His vast possessions? His world-wide celebrity? No! It was this: That Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, had tasted death for him.

O, worldling people, I say to you, in the language of the Saviour, "Lay not up for  
" yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth  
" and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves  
" break through and steal: But lay up for  
" yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither

“moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.” Soon we shall handle the last cheque, and receive the last deed, and present the last account. Then why so much eagerness for that which will be left behind, and which fails to supply the wants of the soul? Why so much concern for fleeting material? There is a pearl whose value overtops the combined millions of earth. No amount of money could purchase it. The life of the Son of God was given for it! That pearl is salvation! And you can have it “without money and without price.” It is yours by trusting in the merits of the atonement, by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. God grant that this salvation may come to you to-day; yea, this moment!

I remark, again, that many persons offer the plea, *that there is plenty of time yet to attend to religion*. A man who was determined to enjoy the pleasures of this world, said it was too soon for him to think of another world. He started out on a journey, and, when at the inn, he was taken seriously ill. The people there sent for a clergyman. He came; and

before the minister could speak, the dying man looked him in the face and said, "Sir, it is too late!" The minister said to him, "Christ is able to save to the uttermost," and explained the plan of salvation to him. But the man's reply was, "Sir, it is too late!" and he died, uttering the doleful words, "It is too late!" What reasons have you for believing that there is ample time to attend to religion? Does the Bible tell you there is time enough? Do your own observations convince you that there is time enough? No! Then bring forward no such plea. If the enemy of souls can only get people into the belief that it is unnecessary to put forth an immediate effort to obtain salvation, he feels sure that he is going to have accessions to his infernal ranks. Disappoint him. Let him not chuckle over his scheme, nor grin over the success of his subtlety. "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the son of man cometh."

"Time enough yet?" Think of your many acquaintances who have been stricken down suddenly by the sickle of death! "Time enough yet?" Think of the hundreds that are annu-

ally swept away by various diseases, young and old sharing the same fate! "Time enough yet?" Listen to the warnings of God, which come thundering in your ears, at early morn, at mid-day, at evening, and at the solemn hour of night. "Time enough yet?" Hear the chapel bell tolling a funeral knell for the departed, and see the mournful procession slowly and solemnly moving towards the cemetery! "Time enough yet?" Look at your own frail body, growing weaker and weaker every day by the constant gnawing of consumption or some other disease! God has not given you any more time than is required. He has not said, "Give me your heart in a year or two, at present it is too soon." No! But he has said, "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Archias, a Grecian chief-magistrate, was so unpopular, that his people conspired against his life. The day arrived for the execution of the plot. Archias was crazed with wine, when a courier arrived from Athens, and hastened to put into his hands a circumstantial account of the whole conspiracy; and, at the same time, he ad-

dressed the magistrate as follows: "My Lord, the person who writes you these letters, conjures you to read them immediately; they contain serious affairs." Archias replied, "Serious affairs to-morrow;" and continued his revel. That night, in the midst of his mirth, the conspirators rushed into his palace, and murdered him and his associates. Now, I have here a letter from Jehovah, addressed to you. In one place I read this warning, "Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is." And in another place I find this passage, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." And in another place I come across these words, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Dare you treat this letter in the way Archias treated the communications brought to him? If you do, you risk your immortal soul, and expose yourself to eternal death. Now put forth an effort to escape! The day of judgment is approaching. Eternity is before you. Tarry no longer.

"Act, act in the living present,  
Heart within, and God o'erhead."



The tables are laden with viands. The invitations to the supper have been circulated. You are invited. Make no excuse, but now pass in, and find pardon and peace in Jesus. This may be your last chance. Who can tell when the scene shall change, and when the mighty angel shall stand, with one foot on the sea and the other on the land, and swear by Him that liveth for ever and ever, that time shall be no longer?



## THE SUPREME JUDICATURE.

“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God.”—  
*Revelation* xx., 12.

THE judgment day is at hand! The earth is being swallowed up by cruel flames! Hear the crackling noise of burning forests! Oceans now vacate the beds which they occupied for many centuries. Hear the waves' terrific roar! Huge rocks, that so long stood boldly against mighty blasts, now shiver and fall. Hear the crashing! The dead now come to life at the sounding of the trumpet, and are fast assembling before the Great Judge. The final earthly scene has been witnessed, the last drama has been acted, the curtain has dropped to rise no more; the foot-lights have been extinguished, and the theater of sublunary life is dark, and empty, and silent. “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God.”

I remark, first, that *there will be a general judgment*. The Bible backs me when I make this significant assertion. It says, in one place, "For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ"; and in another place, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad." I fancy I see many millions of human beings arraigned before the Supreme Judge. It is an overwhelming spectacle! The present population of the globe numbers about one billion two hundred millions. A vast crowd that would be, were they all together. But only think of the millions of human beings who have lived and died since Adam was placed in the garden. Think of the generations that have risen and fallen during the space of nearly six thousand years. Then imagine the vastness of the assemblage on the day of judgment. Sublime, overpowering, stupendous scene! Human beings on the right hand, on the left hand, in front of you, and behind you. Cast your eye anywhere, and

you see men, women, and children. The sounds of the archangel's trumpet have died away; the music of angel harps has ceased; and the mighty Judge takes his seat on the great white throne. Now the books are opened, and the trial commences. It is the highest court of justice, and therefore every case will be finally settled! No postponements from the want of evidence. Listen to the cry: "Rocks, mountains, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" The wicked cry in vain, for God's all-searching eye can find them wherever they are. None shall escape his notice. O, God, thou art omniscient! Who dare attempt to hide from thy face? Thou art omnipotent! Who dare contend against thee? Thy thunders appall. Thy lightnings smite. Thy winds destroy. Thy waters are beyond human control.

Again, I remark, that on the occasion of the general judgment *there will be an infliction of punishment on the wicked.* And this pun-

ishment will be *everlasting*. It will not be *confinement* for a specified number of years; but *torment*, enduring throughout the immeasurable and astounding eternity! The wicked “shall go away into *everlasting* punishment.” They will have to leave nearest and dearest friends, and enter the caverns of darkness and despair, where the Saviour’s gracious presence is not enjoyed, where hope is unknown, where there are “weeping and gnashing of teeth.” What a woful separation that will be!—a separation, never, never to meet again.

Some years ago a man went to California to seek his fortune. Before leaving his family to go there, he promised that when his prospects brightened he would send money to enable the family to go to him. During his absence, his wife received many letters from him; but no money came until after a long, long time. The anxious mother and her little child then started for San Francisco. All went well until one day there was heard a piercing cry of “Fire! Fire!” Every effort was put forth to extinguish the flames, but all in vain. The captain ordered the life-boats to be lowered;



and it was found that there were not boats enough for all on board, and among those left behind were this woman and her little child. She pleaded so very earnestly to be taken, that one in the boat wanted the others to take her; but they refused. At last, however, they consented to take one of them; and that fond mother pressed that darling child to her bosom, and then dropped him into the boat, which soon was far from the burning vessel and the scene of conflagration. Distressing separation! Mother and child cruelly torn from each other! And oh, what must have been her feelings as she gazed for the last time upon the youthful and innocent face of her boy, and thought of her husband whom she expected to embrace in a short time? But her cry of anguish soon became faint, and her frantic movements soon ceased; for the burning vessel made one dreadful plunge, hurling the poor unfortunates into a watery grave. The separations, however, which will take place on the judgment day, will be infinitely sadder than the separation of which I have just spoken. The unsaved daughter will look, for the last

time, into the glowing face of a praying mother, whose christian counsel she discarded, whose noble example she refused to follow, and whose dying words she heeded not. The bitter memories of the irretrievable past will torture her. The opportunities she once had to prepare for the solemn futurity, will marshal themselves before her mind in formidable hosts. She will think of the many sermons she heard preached, of the prayer meetings she attended, and of the Spirit's strivings with her. Then, in the midst of her intense agony, she will exclaim: "Oh, that I had taken the advice of my christian mother! Oh, that I had accepted salvation when Christ offered it! Now it is too late! The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved!" The unconverted mother will behold a daughter taking a position with the ransomed of the Lord; the unconverted son will see the face of his sanctified father lighted up with heavenly smiles. But that father's resting-place will not be the son's resting-place; that father will wear a crown, but the son will not; that father's fingers will gracefully move across the

strings of a golden harp, producing a flood of harmony, but, from that instrument the son will never bring sweet sounds. His song will be a dirge, woful, bitter and depressing! The unconverted father will look up wildly, when he hears the words, "Well done!" addressed to a son whom he persecuted because of his christian principles. That son will go "where the wicked cease from troubling"; but that father will go into everlasting punishment! Depend upon it, God will, on that "great day of his wrath," send his severe chastisements on the ungodly.

"Woe to the men on earth who dwell,  
Nor dread the Almighty's frown,  
When God doth all his wrath reveal,  
And shower his judgments down.

"Sinners, expect those heaviest showers;  
To meet your God, prepare;  
For lo! the seventh angel pours  
His vial on the air."

Further, not only will the wicked be forever deprived of the company of loved ones, but they will also be debarred from entering heaven. They will not be permitted to participate in the joys of that felicitous abode. The

music of angel choirs will not fall upon their ears; the grandeur of the New Jerusalem will not gladden their eyes; the luscious fruits of the tree of life will not be eaten by them; nor will they drink out of the beautiful river that flows by the great white throne. Ah, no! Their place of habitation will be one of terrific gloom and extreme misery. Devils will be their associates, and the dolorous wail of lost souls will be one of the causes of their excessive distraction.

But the wicked will also be punished by a loss of the friendship and presence of God. To lose God, is to lose everything that appertains to real and durable happiness, for He is the grand fountain of every blessing. To be deprived of a Saviour's love and presence, is to be deprived of the soul, to be sent out of heaven, to be separated from dear ones, to be cast into a burning hell! How dreadful is the situation of the ship-wrecked voyager when, on a broken spar, he is tossed about by the wild breakers, and there is no help near him, nor the smallest speck of land in sight. The waves, dashing against him, have drenched his

thin garments, and he is perishing with cold. For several days and nights he has been clinging to that piece of timber, and during all that time he has been without food. The ocean's foam has settled on his emaciated and shivering form, the dew of death has gathered on his pale brow, and he must shortly perish, for the little remaining strength is fast leaving his nerves. The winds sigh around him, and the roar of waters is his death knell! But sadder, far sadder will be the situation of that one, to whom it will be said, on the judgment day: "Depart! thou cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!"

Lastly, I remark, that on the occasion of the general judgment *there will be a bequeathment of rewards to the righteous*. I gladly make this transition to a pleasing topic; for while it is my duty to speak of punishments, as well as rewards, I nevertheless dread to proclaim the terrors of the divine law. The true nature of the rewards to be received by the righteous, is beyond human comprehension. Paul says: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for



them that love him." Is not this great encouragement for that christian mother who climbs the steep hill of difficulty? All may be darkness now; but just a little farther on there are the flashing lights of the celestial city. Those with whom you mixed in days gone by, may have been carried by angels to a brighter land, leaving you alone and sad; but you will have only a little more struggling, after which will come the happy greeting. Your body may ache and your tears flow; but when you shall have passed through the pearly gates, you will feel no pain and shed no tears. O, what a glorious future awaits the child of God! He need not tremble on the day of judgment; for Jesus will smile upon him and say to him, "Come, thou blessed of my father, and inherit the kingdom prepared for thee from the foundation of the world." The New Jerusalem will burst out upon his vision, in grandeur and sublimity; a crown of glory will be placed on his head; a white robe will be given him, also a golden harp; and, in the very highest transport, he will join the angelic hosts in praising the Lamb who died for all.

But the pleasures in which the inhabitants of heaven share, are lasting. The refulgent light of Jehovah's palace will never grow faint; the music of angel choirs will never cease, but the gush of melody, rising higher and higher, will flow on incessantly, making the supernal corridors echo happy responses; no frost will enter that paradise, to leave its blighting effects upon delicious fruits and odorous flowers; eternity cannot impair the burnished walls of that heavenly city; death will not pass in there to mar the pleasure of the shining ones.

"No clouds e'er pass along the sky—

Happy land;

No tear-drops glisten in the eye—

Happy land;

They drink the gushing streams of grace,

And gaze upon the Saviour's face,

Whose brightness fills that holy place—

Happy land!"

Sir Walter Scott met a friend on one of the streets of Edinburgh, and then both had a discussion on the subject of earthly happiness. While they were engaged talking, a simple lad, called Daft Jamie, passed by them; and one of the gentlemen stopped the boy, and

asked him if he was perfectly happy. He answered, "Yes;" but Sir Walter said, "Is there naething ava that troubles you, Jamie?" "Ouie, sir"; replied Jamie, "I wud be unco weal and happy, war it not for ae thing." "Now," said Sir Walter, turning to his friend, "you will find that every person has something in this world, either real or imaginary, that keeps him from being completely happy." But, my hearers, the inhabitants of heaven live in an atmosphere of unalloyed happiness.

Oh, while I look into your faces my heart yearns for your eternal safety. I see persons whose brows show the marks of care; and I see the beauty and vigor of youth, and wonder how it will be with you when the "dead, small and great," shall stand before God. Will the judgment day bring you happiness or woe, peace or misery, light or darkness, gain or deprivation, heaven or—hell? Will you take a seat among the Daniels, and the Pauls, and the Wesleys, and the Whitfields; or will you go down into the caverns of the lost, to spend an eternity with devils? Will yours be a song of gladness, or a lamentable dirge? These are

not idle questions, but questions of the greatest importance. Then, what will be your decision? Decide to take Christ, and you will gladly welcome the judgment, knowing that "there is laid up for you a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give you at that day."

If, while you are now in your seats, you heard the angel's trumpet sounding to call forth the dead, and felt the earth jar beneath your feet, and, upon looking out of the window, saw an illumination in the clouds, caused by the brightness of the Almighty One—the Judge of all nations,—what dread would fill your hearts; what frantic movements you would make; what distressing cries you would utter. You would feel you were not prepared for the judgment, and great would be your agony. But, as it now is, you have every opportunity to prepare. You have not been commanded to render an account of your stewardship. Then improve the time now afforded you. Be in readiness for the final reckoning. Delay not a moment. "Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the son of man cometh."

The boy who has been away from the old homestead for long years, is received with many congratulations, when he returns. The aged mother forgets her infirmities when the long-absent son puts in his appearance; and she rushes joyously forward to embrace him. The greeting is a happy one. And when I see you on the judgment day, I earnestly hope that I can grasp the hand of each one of you, and offer you my hearty congratulations. Amen.



## PROOFS OF A GOOD MOTHER.

“She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.”—*Proverbs* xxxi., 27, 28.

A GOOD mother is an invaluable gift. Her influence is not confined exclusively to the home circle, but goes far and immeasurably beyond the boundary of domestic life. Astronomers tell us that the distance between the earth and the sun is about ninety-five millions of miles; but who can ascertain the extent of a good mother's influence? Mathematical rules will not lead to the discovery. Silently her influence is working through the family till it reaches society, and through society till it becomes felt in future ages. Dr. Talmage says: “The door-sill of the dwelling-house is the foundation of church and state.” The teachings of one exemplary mother have

moulded the destinies of hundreds. Men have gone into the arena of public life, taking with them those grand principles which they, while under the parental roof, were taught to cherish. Statesmen, who in early youth had received good home training have exhibited that training as they spoke in the House of Congress. George Washington's piety, purity and truthfulness were rays refracted from his mother.

Allow me, at this time, to bring forward what I consider to be proofs of a good mother.

It is a proof of her excellence *if she makes home attractive*. A home without maternal love in it, has very few attractions. The father, the sister, or the brother may be affectionate; but if she, who is queen of the household, does not lighten the burden of her son or daughter by her genial smiles, and kind expressions, and warm sympathy, then the home is far, far from what it should be. O, I pity the unfortunate children who get no consolation from their mother! The youth have their little troubles and sorrows, and they need solace. We who have grown to manhood and womanhood, may look lightly upon their tears and consider their

troubles insignificant; but let us remember that they are heavy for *them* to bear, and that we do not see their perplexities through youthful eyes. What would make the relentless laugh, would bring bitter tears from the eyes of little ones. Mothers, give them your sympathy, then. Take them affectionately by the hand, and wipe away the tear. Make them feel that you sympathize with them when their hearts throb from sorrow. It is just as easy to bestow on them a smile as a frown. It is quite as convenient for you to speak kindly to them as to speak harshly. And how much good it would do them to be looked at lovingly, and spoken to sympathetically! They will soon have sorrow of a different kind; and no mother will be near to comfort them. They will have to face the cold, unfriendly world, and their childhood's home will be a thing of the past, and their mother will be in her grave, or else far away from them, and the family circle will be broken, and the sorrows and joys of innocent youth will have departed forever. Then, before your children bid farewell to home and wander out upon the world, show them such

love, speak to them in such tones, that home shall have charms for them; that they shall feel more happy and contented at their own fireside, than they would feel anywhere else; and, in after years, their minds shall revert with pleasure and gladness to the period of their infancy; and they will bless mother, and thank God for having bestowed on them a gift so precious.

It is impossible for me to think of my home without a throbbing heart and happy emotions. When I get melancholy (for we all get dispirited at times) very often the cheering words of my affectionate, christian mother come into my mind; and I am strengthened and encouraged. O, it is comforting to know that there is one on earth who prays for me, and holds me in remembrance, although I am far from her side.

"A mother's love!  
If there be one thing pure,  
Where all beside is sullied;  
That can endure  
When all things pass away;  
If there be aught  
Surpassing human deed, or word, or thought,  
It is a mother's love.

It is another proof of a mother's excellence, *if she sets a beneficial example to her children.* How many sons and daughters have been eternally ruined by the cursed example of their mothers! How many children have been taught by their mothers to use God's name irreverently, to lie, to cheat, to steal, to drink from the inebriating chalice, to indulge in unsanctified amusements, to neglect the House of God, and to look lightly upon religion? O, mothers, your example is either ennobling or demoralizing those whom God has intrusted to your keeping. If your children see vice and immorality at home, their lives will be characterized by viciousness and immorality when they are abroad, and your gray hairs will be brought down in sorrow to the grave, and your children will curse you. A young man was convicted of murder. His mother visited him in his cell; and when there she was forced to listen to this remark from the murderer,—“If it had not been for you, I should never have been here!” What bitter remorse must have seized that mother when she was thus impeached by her son, upon whom the sen-



tence of death had been passed! A child—made a murderer by her example!

How important it is that mothers set forth a good example in presence of their children! It is natural for the child to do as the mother does. Hence, if her deportment be consistent and praise-worthy, the child's behaviour will be such. Richard Cecil, once an infidel, resolved to be a christian because he was impressed with the life of his pious mother, and desired to emulate her virtues. Samuel Budgett's conversion was the result of his mother's godlike example. Knowing, then, the force of example, it should be the aim of the mother to set an example worthy of imitation. If she does this, she will, at her death, have left to her children a grand legacy.

I know mothers who very seldom attend church or Sabbath School; and how can they expect their children to take any interest or pleasure in going to those places where mother is seldom, or perhaps never, found? Of course many mothers, although not in the habit of teaching in Sunday School, or frequenting the house of prayer themselves, are quite willing

that their children should go to both places; but example is better than precept; and it is the mother's duty to set the example. If it is good for the children to hear the gospel preached, it is good for the mother also to listen to the "glad tidings" of salvation. If the children should know how to live and how to die, so should the mother.

The ancient Romans were accustomed to place the busts of their distinguished ancestors in the vestibules of their houses, that they might be continually reminded of their noble deeds. The young grew up to revere the worthies whose statues they saw so frequently, and to emulate the virtues which gave their ancestors such lasting fame. Now-a-days there are no busts of our excellent ancestors kept in the porches of our houses, to stimulate the youth to live nobly. But there can be a living example—an excellent character in the house, to be imitated and admired by the young. I mean the example of a good mother. O that every family circle were adorned with a mother whose life would inspire the young to live useful and beautiful lives, so that by their example the world would be benefited.

Further: It is a proof of a mother's excellence *if she imparts wholesome counsel to her children*. There are young men here who have left their homes, bidden a farewell to loved ones, and have commenced to battle for themselves. They have started on the voyage of life. Young man, what about home? Let me ask if you have forgotten the christian advice which was given you as you were about to step down from the threshold of home? Have you forgotten the tearful eye, and care-worn face, and entreating look, and burning utterances of that one who, as you were leaving, placed a Bible in your trunk, and said, "God bless you, my child"? No! Your mother's words are fresh in your memory still. You have as clear a recollection of the parting, as if it had taken place but yesterday. And oftentimes you meditate on the wise counsel which your mother imparted to you. In temptation's hour her words have checked you. In times of perplexity you have been relieved by something encouraging which she had spoken perhaps many years before. Ay, material changes may take place in our circumstances; the infirm-

ities of old age may cruelly fasten upon us; years may roll into oblivion; those with whom we had mingled in childhood's days may pass away, and, like a dream, be quite forgotten; but never, methinks, will the impressions that have been made on our minds by the benignant words of a loving mother, be erased from memory's tablet. They will linger with us like the last notes of delightful music heard from over the still water in the evening time, bringing to us sweet recollections of the happy past! Mothers, give good advice to your sons and daughters! When a rebuke is needed, don't be silent; but let your words go forth to caution, and refine, and beautify. The queen of home has power to create within the child's breast an intense hatred for vice and a strong love for virtue, simply by her every-day teaching. Or she possesses the power to make the child vicious in the extreme. It was a parent's teaching that incited Hannibal to march an army over the previously untrodden Alps, in order that he might vent his spleen against the Romans, to whom he was made swear undying hatred. Then, you can readily form an idea

of the results of wholesome, christian teaching. The young man who has had the benefit of such teaching is not at all likely to do anything to bring disgrace upon himself or his parents. He is esteemed by society for his unflinching integrity, and he rises to a position of distinction and trust. His conduct reflects credit upon his mother and garlands the family circle with honors.

Again: It is a proof of a mother's excellence, *if she prays for the salvation of her children*. Her act of praying for them exhibits most beautifully her anxiety to see them happy and prosperous in the highest degree. It shows the depth of her maternal love, the genuineness of her affection, the loveliness of her character, and the grandeur of her ideal knowledge. Who would not be solemnly impressed by seeing a mother alone in her chamber, kneeling at the bedside, and praying that God would bless and convert her dear children? Angelic is her appearance, as, with folded hands, and eyes looking towards heaven, she holds converse with her Saviour. God hears and answers the earnest petitions of the



mother, and the shining hosts look over the battlements of heaven and smile upon her while she prays. Many a son has been arrested in his sinful career by hearing a mother's prayers. Many a haughty, pleasure-loving daughter has become penitent for her sins by catching the prayerful utterances of a mother. There is power in a mother's prayers. A pious woman had one son, who grew up gay and dissipated. She followed him with prayers and entreaties. One day he said to her, "Mother, let me have my best clothes; I am going to a ball to-night." She plead with him not to go; but all in vain. As he was leaving the house, she said to him, "My son, remember, when you are dancing, I shall be praying to the Lord to convert you." At the ball there was not that mirthfulness exhibited which is usually seen at dancing-parties. An unaccountable gloom hung over the whole assembly, and one of the dancers remarked, "We never had so dull a meeting in our lives." The young man, hearing this remark, felt his conscience smitten, and he said, "I know what is the matter, my poor old mother is now praying for her ungodly son."

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He took his hat, and said, "I will never be found in such a place as this again." That night he began to pray for mercy. His mother's prayer for his conversion was heard, and a glorious response was flashed back from God's throne. Better than fame, better than riches, better than high social position, is the invaluable boon—a prayerful mother. The clod may lie upon her coffin; only a small tombstone, and only a few flowers may define the spot where sleeps her sacred dust; but the traces of her noble, godlike life will still be visible. There will be living monuments to remind us of her many virtues. Though her body return to dust, the influence of her example and teachings is imperishable! Her children would often go to the cemetery to deck the mound afresh with roses, or cut the long grass so that the flowers might not be entirely concealed. As the mourners would bend over those flowers, tears would fall silently on the bright leaves, and deep sobbings would break the silence which had previously reigned among the tombs of the departed. When such a mother dies, do not spare the flowers. Go

into the garden and pluck the loveliest and best, and place them on her breast, strew them upon the coffin-lid, and afterwards implant them in the soil beneath which she sweetly reposes. They will be hidden for awhile by the snow; but at the return of spring go back to that grave and straighten up those stems which may be prostrated by the weight of snow, and smooth the surface of the mound, and give it an attractive appearance. Show that you have not forgotten her. And may your life be such that when you too shall have passed away, there will be loved ones to adorn your grave with flowers, and to shed tears over your remains. May your many graces and noble deeds make your name memorable through the ages, and win for you a crown, whose lustre cannot be dimmed by the unbounded eternity. Amen.

## THE FELICITOUS EXTINCTION.

“And there was no more sea.”—*Revelation* xxi., 1.

AS the closing scene in a drama is usually the most striking one; and as the peroration of a refined orator's speech contains the most beautiful metaphors, the most impressive tropes, and the most melodious and gently-flowing periods, so the closing chapters of the Bible are garlanded with the grandest descriptions and the most inspiring eloquence. This twenty-first chapter of Revelation is certainly a glowing description of the Heavenly Jerusalem; and the writer, as if eager to encourage the christian, almost at the commencement makes the glorious declaration: “And there was no more sea.” The sea is suggestive of cruel separation, of disagreeable uncertainty, and of imminent danger. Although we have often strolled along the sea-shore, and looked

admiringly at the white-crested waves as they rolled in upon the pebbly strand;—although the music of the waters has touched the finer feelings of our nature, bearing us, in tranquil thought, far away amongst pleasurable surroundings and scenes of unspeakable beauty;—although we have found solace in some lonely retreat close beside the trackless main, —still we have a natural dread of the treacherous ocean; for, as Byron says:

(Man) “sinks into its depths with bubbling groan—  
Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown.”

The sea stops personal communication; but *in heaven there will be no barriers to personal intercourse*. I have dear relatives in the old land; yet the broad Atlantic intervenes, so that I cannot grasp their hands, nor hear their voices, nor meet their smiles. And there are some in this congregation whose affections go out over the deep-blue sea. You have loved ones in that distant country; and no wonder you feel painfully anxious to be near them again. For long, weary years you have been deprived of the sweet pleasure of conversing face to face with them. The sunny days when



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you and they joyously lingered together, are now no more; and O, the memories of those by-gone hours are sadly sweet to you. At evening, while the twilight shadows steal in upon you, the scenes of your younger days arrange themselves before your mental vision in panoramic succession, bringing to your recollection genial countenances, and pleasant pathways, and festooned bowers, and places of rustic attractiveness. You can indulge, however, only in dreamy reflection. There is no joyous reality. Sometimes you talk of going to see the absent ones; but when you think of the mighty deep, you become disheartened and will not start on so perilous a voyage. Thus you are forbidden the gratification of personal intercourse. Thank God, however, the inhabitants of yonder heavenly country will not be denied this gratification. No angry ocean in heaven! No turbulent waters there to prevent parents meeting with children, or friends commingling with friends. The redeemed in glory shall wing their flight through the celestial realms, unimpeded by ocean or tempest. They will not have to stand, as we do, on the sea-

shore, fearing to launch out on the bosom of the deep; nor will they be compelled to turn back in bitter disappointment, on account of the merciless breakers. O, no; the inhabitants of the city of God experience no drawbacks. Their movements are uninterrupted, and their desires gratified. Prophets are privileged to hold interview with one another; martyrs can converse about their present ecstasies; John Wesley can offer his congratulations to Whitfield; and brothers and sisters and parents can have interchange of thought, for there will be "no more sea!" Happy truth! Glorious hope! Radiant future! O, sorrowing friend, dry up the falling tear, and look forward to your heavenly home—the place where loved ones meet, never, never to part.

"Yes, we'll meet them in the city  
That is just across the strand,  
And our hearts shall leap with rapture  
When we take them by the hand.

"O, how sweet shall be the meeting,  
Earthly words can ne'er declare;  
We shall know the bliss of heaven  
When we meet each other there!"

The sea causes disagreeable suspense; but *in heaven there will be no painful uncertainty.* When we move out from the harbor and wave a farewell to the friends who are painfully anxious to catch a glimpse of the last expressions on our faces, we are in doubt as to whether we shall ever reach our destination. We think of a hundred obstacles, either of which might debar us from landing on the shore for which we started. A shudder comes over us, and our hearts throb wildly, and our anxiety increases, while we contemplate the probability of our experiencing bitter disappointment. All our bright, fond hopes may be utterly blasted; our feelings, now buoyant and gladsome, may, ere long, become sadly depressed; the brilliant future into which we now gaze with a joyous expectancy, may shortly be shrouded in the garb of deep mourning; the gay bark which now glides with us over placid waters, may, at any moment, fall a prey to the wild waves, and be left, a shattered hulk, on some lone rock in mid-ocean. Alas! how oft

“The wave, that we danced on at morning, ebbs from us,  
And leaves us, at eve, on the bleak shore—alone.”

How frequently do the flowers of our brightest expectations lose their fragrancy, and droop, and die! Hence, the mind of the voyager is in a state of painful uncertainty. He longs to reach the desired haven, and to tread the terra firma, and meet those on whom his heart's affections are placed. Were he but positive that he would arrive in safety, his suspense would instantly take flight; but he has no such assurance. Doubts and fears agitate his bosom, and mar his pleasure. Let us rejoice, however, that there will be no distressing uncertainty in the Paradise of Jehovah,—no sensibility of doubt “over the line that defines the boundary” of the christian's inheritance. A pleasing positiveness is connected with heaven. No fluctuating ocean is found there, nor changeful winds, to create feelings of anxiety and pain. In that “Better Land” “sorrow and sighing” are unknown. The fond mother will never have occasion to fear lest she should not realize a happy union with her boy. When on earth, she had those anxieties. Many a night she has sat alone in her cottage, thinking of her absent son, while

the wind moaned through the trees, and the angry sea broke violently against the rocky coast close by, and the vivid lightning flashed in wild grandeur, and the deafening thunder rolled across the sky in terrific peals. That mother's heart was sad as she thought of her boy who was far out on the infuriated ocean. How painfully anxious she was for his return to the old homestead. O, the tears she shed, and the heart-aches she experienced on his account! Often has she opened the door of the cottage to see whether she could discern some ship which might bring home the absent one. Her tearful eyes have tried to pierce the thick darkness of the night, to catch, if possible, even the faintest glimpse of the vessel's light; but all in vain! Long years passed away, and still that mother was not made happy by her son's return. Bitter, indeed, was the uncertainty that lurked within that lonely abode at the sea side.

Thank God for the felicitous certainty which is in heaven!

Again: imminent danger is connected with the sea; but *in heaven there will be no danger.*



The ocean's bed is the tomb of thousands. Alas! how many steamers, whose decks were crowded with human beings, have suddenly gone down into the dark waters, carrying with them the youth—beautiful and promising, and the person in the prime of life, as well as him whose locks were whitened by the frosts of many winters. The proud ship has struck some hidden rock, and merry laughter has turned into wild shrieks, cheeks that were flushed with hope and delight have become deathly pale, music and song were hushed, hearts, which only a moment before were light and gay, have been stricken with terror, and the cries of anguish have ceased, only when the cruel sea had engulfed the unfortunates; and nought could be heard afterwards but the wind's funeral dirge, and the noise of breaking waves, and the screech of the sea-bird. Numerous are the perils of the deep: vessels are disabled by adverse winds and driven upon the cragged coast, or they are destroyed by fire, or they fill and sink because of an undiscovered leak formed by the heavy swells. This hour may find us gliding serenely over

the billows; and the next hour may find us in a watery grave, there to remain till the archangel's trumpet shall be sounded, at whose overpowering noise the earth and the sea shall give up their dead. The lamentable wrecks that have been recorded tell us of the ocean's perils. The steamship *Canadian* struck on a hidden rock and foundered, and nearly all on board perished with her; the *Atlantic* went on the rocks in a fog; the *Arctic* and the *Vesta* struck in a fog; and only a short time ago the steamship *Schiller* sank with nearly all on board. O, what dangers are connected with the sea! How often it happens that the voyager, who starts out with bright expectations, comes in contact with the grim monster Death, and passes into a solemn eternity ere he reaches the goal of his desires. Deceitful, treacherous ocean, in vain do we implore thee to

" Give back the lost and lovely—those for whom  
The place was kept at board and hearth so long! "

But in heaven there will be no danger. The christian, after entering the celestial city, realizes a happy exemption from all danger,

and, in the highest transport, he exclaims, "Victory! victory! through the blood of the Lamb!"

"Safe in the arms of Jesus,"

is his song; and he can use William Hunter's dying language,—“All is well, all is well!” Somewhere in the East there is said to be a tree which is a non-conductor of electricity. The people know it; and when a storm comes they flee to it for safety. But the inhabitants of the supernal mansions will not need to flee for safety. Thunder-storms or ocean-tempests will never overtake them. No ship-wreck scenes will be witnessed in heaven. There the mariner needs no compass, and the voyager no life-preserver. They will not be made to shudder with the piercing cry: “Breakers ahead! breakers ahead!” In that fair haven of bliss and repose there is no exposure to injury or death. O, land of perfect safety and serenity! in it the shipwrecked can find solace and protection,—in it the tempest-beaten can find everlasting shelter from the storm!

Finally: the sea reminds us of cruel separation; but *in heaven there will be no partings.*

The calamity of being far distant from those we love, has left sorrowful traces on the once sunny brow, and wrung tears of anguish from the eye that once sparkled with delight. The gay flowers of the social and family circles are plucked and taken away to bloom in another land, and to send forth their sweets on another air. This earth is a vestibule through which our friends are constantly passing—some leaving aged mothers in remote hamlets—some leaving dear brothers and sisters—and some leaving the genial associations of their childhood. We hear that a steamship will set sail in a few minutes, and we hasten down to the harbor to see her start. Upon looking up at her deck we see many faces, some smiling, and others wearing expressions of sadness. And as we are endeavoring to read those expressions, we hear bitter sobbings from this one and that one on the platform. Need I ask what's the matter? Alas! there are loved ones taking leave of one another. The sad and touching Farewell! comes from tremulous voices in that gathering; and we can readily understand why there is this exhibition of grief.

Some years ago, I stood on the deck of a crowded steamship as she sailed out of the harbor of Londonderry, Ireland. She was bound for America. A brass band played lively airs as she left the port and dashed out upon the blue wave. Just then I turned my eyes in the direction of the land we were leaving—the land of my boyhood, and I saw a scene which awoke within me melancholy feelings. The harbor was thronged with spectators, many of whom were bidding a farewell to those they would never meet again on earth. I shall never forget that sorrowful parting! Husbands were leaving their wives, brothers leaving their sisters, children leaving their parents, friends leaving their friends. Hands were wrung with agony, and eyes were suffused with tears, and hearts throbbed with emotions of deep regret. There were few persons on that Londonderry wharf and few on board the departing steamer, who were not affected into tears at that trying moment. The sound of drum, and the notes of cornet, and the clang of cymbal in that band, could not remove the sadness which rent the breasts



of the hundreds who remained, and the hundreds who were leaving their native land. Even now there is many a cottage and hamlet in deep mourning because of the absence of those whose joviality and radiant smiles made the fireside cheery and the home attractive. The voices that rose and fell in sweet cadence, are not heard in the spot whence the soothing strains once emanated; nor does the festal music flit through those rooms which were once reverberant with soul-stirring sounds. As of yore, the ivy creeps along the walls of the dwelling, and the "old oak tree" near the gate proudly rears its head, and the flowers of the garden wear their bright tints; and the birds sing sweetly, and the brook down in the ravine flows onward with unabating energy; still, the sweetness and joy of that homestead have been extracted. The loved ones are gone! There remains a sad, sad vacuum!

But there are no separations in heaven to cast dismal shadows around the redeemed. When once there is a renewed union on Canaan's shore, the permanency of that union is certain. None there will have an inclina-

tion to withdraw from that circle which radiates the purest love, and the most unaffected friendship. Death will not enter that "land of pure delight," to cause separation. "And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." O, blessed country! O, heaven of amaranthine brilliancy! O, home for the weary wanderer!—

"Where every severed wreath is bound;  
Where none do hear the knell  
That smites the heart with that deep sound,  
Farewell! beloved, farewell!"

And now, my hearers, I come to an impressive scene in the drama of earthly life. It is the last scene! Hundreds are standing upon the verge of an unbounded eternity. The rich and the poor, the youth and the aged are there. The harp has breathed out its final chords, and nature is seized with a tremulous thrill at the sight of that solemn and mysterious futurity before it. I see in that gathering the blanched cheek and distressful looks of the worldling. I hear the deep wail of agony sent up by those who have persistently refused

salvation, till now it is forever too late. On the other hand, I see in that gathering, faces beaming with a heavenly light, and eyes flashing with blissful eagerness and holy triumph; and there falls, like music, on my ear, a sound of glad voices, saying: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith—henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day."

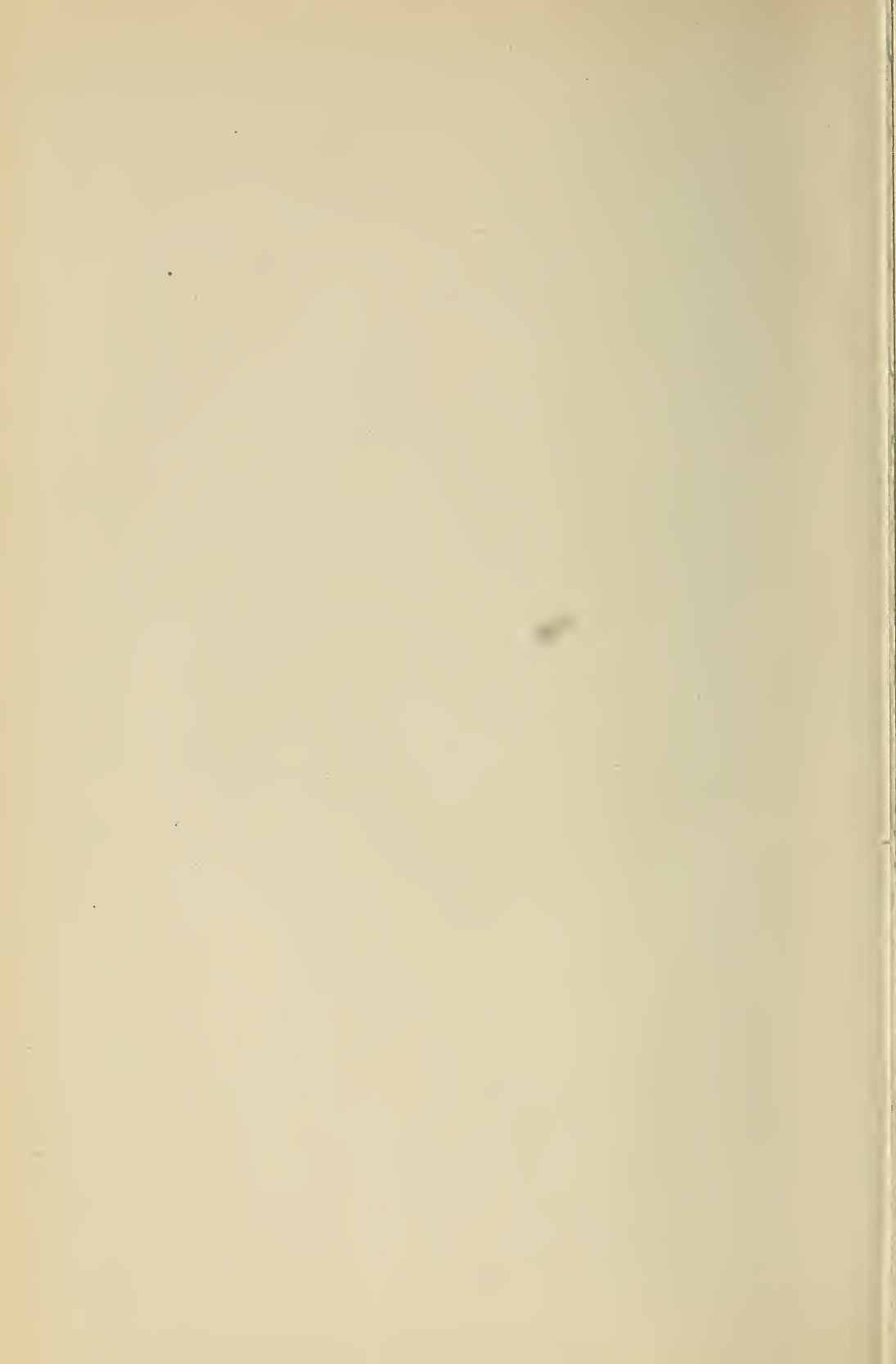
My brother, my sister, what will be the closing scene in the drama of your earthly existence? God grant that it may be a scene—bright and beautiful—one over which the angelic choirs shall chant, and all heaven shall smile! If you fall asleep in the arms of Jesus, you shall wake in the sunlight of the supernal realms, to behold the sublimity and grandeur of the "many mansions," to hear sweetest music ringing throughout vast corridors, and to embrace those around whom your affections fondly cling. O, let us raise loudest hosannas to our God for the sure promises he

has given us of a home beyond the swelling Jordan—of a home in a land where bereavement, pain and death are unknown, and where there is “no more sea.” And now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God our Saviour—to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen and Amen!









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